The Estate of Man

BY

NATURE and GRACE.

Together with

His Duty to God, his neighbor, and himself;

WITH

Meditations to the several Heads annexed.

By *Edward Thomas*, Minister of the Gospel at *Denham* in *Suffolk*.

Psal. 119. 160.

Thy word is true from the beginning, and every one of thy righteous judgements endureth for ever.

Psal. 119. 97.

O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day.

Nil ita mentem ab amore mundi separat, nil sic animam contra tentationes roborat, nil hominem ita excitat & adjuvat ad omne opus bonum, & ad omnem laborem; quam gratia contemplationis. *Bern. Medit.*

LONDON,

Printed for *Ralph Smith*, at the Sign of the Bible by the *Exchange* in *Cornhil*, 1674.

David E. Davy.

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TO

The Right Honourable,

HORATIO *Lord* Townſend, *Baron of* Lynne Regis, *and Lord Lieutenant of the County of* Norfolk.

My Lord,

THe fame of the Eminent Piety of your Family and Anceſtours on both ſides; Your Lordſhips zeal for Religion, King and

Country, and the many favours I have received, encourage me to dedicate this small Treatise as a testimony of gratitude; and though the frame and contexture may discover more weakness than is meet to come to your Lordships view, yet the substance of it being apparent truth, and the intent to promote Piety, I cannot doubt of its acceptance, though tendred by

Denham Aug. 10. 1674.

Your Lordships unworthy Servant

Edward Thomas.

To

To the Reader.

Reader,

SIn hath put such a cheat on the humane nature since the fall, that it is not onely averse to that which is good, but it refuseth to receive the divine testimony: But better things are hoped of you, who profess your self a Christian, than to put such an affront upon God, as not to believe him. God hath been pleased to make known his mind to us in the Sacred Scriptures: the Divine Authority whereof is manifested by multitudes of mi-

racles, wonders and ſigns wrought at the delivery thereof, ſuch as the world before nor ſince never ſaw. Theſe holy writings are with us, tranſlated into our own Language, read, preached and expounded to us conſtantly, and you are Baptized into this faith, ſo that it were a moſt unworthy and vile thing for you to apoſtatize to unbelief; for if you have the ſpirit and ingenuity of a Chriſtian you will not onely maintain that there is nothing froward or perverſe in them, but earneſtly, and to your utmoſt, contend for the faith once delivered to the Saints. In theſe ſacred writings you are informed of the danger of your ſtate by nature, and alſo of your priviledge by Grace.

First,

First, your danger by nature is apparent by that pravity that is in you, whereby you are become vile, corrupt and abominable in Gods sight, and though the sight hereof cannot be pleasing, yet it is necessary in order to your recovery, and if you will deal faithfully, and bring your hearts and the Divine accusations together, you will acknowledge the truth of God in the charge drawn up against you, and loath your self.

Secondly, your danger is great by reason of Potent, Politick, and mortal enemies, that are incessantly contriving and driving on your destruction; your flesh lusting infatiably, and hurrying you on furiously to evil, The world ever presenting toys and

trifles to ensnare and delude you, and Satan that old Serpent is every where lurking under disguises to enslave you, and confirm you to him.

Thirdly, Your past guilt never ceases crying out for execution upon you. Now, Reader, know your state, and see your danger, and see if conscience will not bear witness to all accusations drawn up against you, and let the sight hereof so awaken you, that you may in good earnest seek the right remedy; for your state by nature is a state intolerable.

2. The Holy Scriptures make plain your priviledges, for herein is made a discovery of the unsearchable riches of Divine grace to mankind. God the Father pitieth us, and provides a

ransome: God the Son, assumed our nature to satisfie justice for our offences, and purchaseth us with his own blood, and reconciles God and man, and declares himself able to save to the uttermost, all that come to God by him: And God the Holy Ghost, becomes a comforter, by renewing our natures, mortifying our corruptions, stocking us with grace and holy principles, and bearing witness with us that we are the sons of God.

Gods love is such notwithstanding your vileness and unworthiness that if you now live as his child and servant, you shall have grace and glory. His love is infinite, and his grace is sufficient for you, And therefore he appoints you to honourable

Services from the day that you do heartily and sincerely give up your self to him, as

First, He calls you to know him and Jesus Christ, whom to know is eternal life. He shews you his goodness, and bids you love him; His greatness, and bids you fear him; His Alsufficiency, and bids you trust in him; And because your weakness and unworthiness is great, he bids you to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus: His service is perfect freedom, and the highest honour and dignity, and all his Ordinances are means appointed by himself to convey grace and good things to you. O draw nigh to him with a prepared heart, and taste and see how good the Lord is.

Thirdly, He calls you to do him

service among your brethren. He informs you what is their due, and your duty, and would have you to promote and exercise righteousness, charity, and goodness to all men, that you may be a blessing in your place, and they may blesse you and blesse God for you. What honour can you desire on earth greater than to serve your generation according to the will of God?

3ly. He would have you never idle in your own vineyard at home; He is shewing you your faults that you may be humbled and amended. He lays glory and endless happiness before you, and requires your diligence in working out your own salvation, and he will assist you; He is ever warning, awakning and inciting

you, your weakneſs, wants, and unworthineſs are great, & require you to be in a conſtant praying and plyable frame, your heart muſt be kept with all diligence, your tongue (that unruly member) muſt be well guarded and governed, and your whole man ſanctified. The intent of this Treatiſe is to mind you of your duty, and by a meditation to detain you, that you may be affected therein; If you ſhall hereby be incited and provoked to the life and practice of Chriſtianity, I have my end, and you will not be offended with theſe lines from

Your ſervant for
Chriſts ſake.
Edward Thomas.

The Introduction.

A Reasonable soul, and a humane body are not more necessary to constitute a man, than knowledge and faith to make a Christian: Without knowledge we cannot act as men, and without faith we cannot act as Christians. We must have eyes to see, as well as hands to act; and are highly concerned to see that we have a right notion of things, for a false light may prove worse than darkness. We are Creatures made for action, It will be our happiness if we rightly understand what is that good that God hath appointed for the

the sons of men, and imploy our selves accordingly. Now none can inform us hereof so happily and fully as God himself; And he is pleased to set up a twofold light to direct us, The one natural to the reasonable creature, which consists in those notions and maxims planted in nature, which yet are greatly dimmed by our fall, and may be called the lesser light. The other is supernatural, granted to us out of the exceeding riches of Divine Grace by revelation, and contained in the holy Scriptures, which may be called The greater Light; This light makes manifest to us by faith those things that are out of the sight or ken of nature, And hereby is made a discovery to us, first of our selves, Secondly, of God. Thirdly, of the Covenant of Grace, and mans duty.

Chap.

CHAP. I.

Of the natural state of Man.

GOd is pleased in the sacred Scriptures to discover man's state in the Creation, wherein we find him consulting and determining to make him in his own image, after his own likeness, *Gen.* 1. 26, 27. which did not onely consist in possessing him with an immortal soul, having several faculties, nor onely in the dominion he gave him over the earthly creatures, but it also consisted in those endowments of knowledge, innocency, righteousness and true holiness, which he was blessed withall; In which state God seated him in a garden of pleasure, where he made the earthly creatures doe him homage, and receive from him their names, and after his view of all the creatures, of which none were fit for his society, he makes

and

and brings him a meet help, and having gratified him with all things for necessity and delight, God for the tryal of his obedience forbids him the fruit of a certain tree, which he (by Satans temptation) presuming to eat of, became liable to death and fell under Divine displeasure, and is become so despicable and miserable since that sin, that all his posterity lye under dreadfull evils, which may be comprized under three heads. 1. A depraved nature. 2ly. He is infected with mortal enemies. 3ly. Liable to the greatest mischief.

SECT. I.

Adams nature is depraved.

ALmighty God, who perfectly knows the state of all his creatures, is pleased to assure us, that since

since the fall of *Adam*, Mankind, that was made the glory of the Creation, is become a forlorn and loathsome creature, and his heart and nature swarms and is overrun with many evils, which render him justly offensive to his maker, having evil ever present with him, and his heart always inclined to evil, which appears by what God chargeth him withy as

First, Mankind stands charged with ignorance and a blind mind. A blind eye makes the body a very dungeon, but Oh how dismall is it to have a blind mind? But God looked down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there were any that did understand and seek God, and behold, they are all gone aside, *Psal.* 14. 2, 3. Want of understanding makes them err. And how can it be otherwise? for their understanding which is the seat of Principles, is darkned, and the heart which is the principle of operation, is

is blinded. *Ephes.* 4. 18. Great men in *Israel* know not, neither will they understand, but walk on in darkness, *Psal.* 82. 5. and the poor are foolish, and know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgement of their God, *Jer.* 5. 3. Ignorance so benighteth all, that without divine light to guid them, and grace to change them, their own spark-like *ignis fatuus*, will lead them past recovery, before they are aware, into the infernal pit.

Meditation.

Who would have thought that man, who was made in Gods image in knowledge should become darkness it self! that can see God no where, though he is every where, nor see his own ayls though they are without number, nor understand his duty, though every thing about him calls him to it, and he heares of it alwayes? How dismal is their state that know not whither they go? and are so deceived as to call evil

good

good, and good evil, yea and think verily that they ought to doe many things, or any thing againſt Chriſt the onely Redeemer, *Act.*26.9. and that the murder of Gods deareſt ſervants, is not ſin, but good ſervice! *Joh.*16.2. Is this a ſtate to be endured? Alas, if I am in darkneſs, I may ſoon fall into utter darkneſs. Darkneſs hath in it errour and terrour. If I ſtay here I periſh; Ignorance will keep me from the ſight of my ſelf, and my Saviour, my duty and my danger, and make me unable to diſtinguiſh betwixt my deareſt Lord, and my deadly enemy; neither in this ſtate can I know how, or what to pray for as I ought; Here is an evil intolerable; I am highly concerned to read, hear and enquire, and pray, and call night and day, that I may receive my ſight, eſpecially conſidering that I carry ever with me that dark ſhaddow of a depraved mind, that makes me erre, and of a proud fancy that

makes.

makes me apt to think I am rich and need nothing, when I have nothing but what tends to my undoing. Open mine eyes, O Lord, that I may see, annoint mine eyes, O blessed Saviour, with thine eye salve, for a state of ignorance is intollerable: Who can endure to see himself in such a condition, that he knows not how to do, speak or think as he ought?

Secondly, Vanity and folly is by God charged upon mankind. Man that was made with consultation, as designed for the honour of his maker, and the benefit of the world, is so by sin degenerate, that his common name is *Vain Man*, *Job* 11.12. *He knows vain man, vain man would be wise*, Satan hath sifted him till there is nothing but bran left. He is become empty of good principles; And though his heart is alwaies putting forth in thoughts, yet have they no worth or wisdom in them. *The Lord knows the thoughts of man that they are vanity*, *Psal.* 94.

11. And what a foolish creature is he become? His sayings and doings are without wisdom. How How like a fool doth he speak when he saith, *How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most high?* Psal. 73. 11. *Can he judge through the thick cloud? Thick clouds are a covering to him,* Job. 22. 13. Or, *What can the Almighty doe for them,* ver. 17. And doe they not act like fools, when *they rejoyce to doe evil?* Prov. 2. 14. *And their soul delights it self in their abominations?* Isa. 66. 3. *Or when he cuts down a tree, and makes a God of it, and falleth down and worships it, and prayes to it, and saith, Deliver me, for thou art my God?* Isa. 44. 17.

Medit. What a dismal change is this? that man, who was the chief of the ways of God on earth (whom all the earthly creatures did dread, and those above did serve by their operation and influence) is become vain and foolish, and sent to school

to the Ant, and upraided with the knowledge of the Ox and Ass, which are none of the quickest creatures in apprehension? I see disobedience to Divine commands is a dreadfull blasting evil, that can turn Angels into Devils, and reasonable men into fools; And how notoriously apparent is this in my self, who find much vanity and folly in all my thoughts, reasonings, behaviour, words and works? and am exceeding apt by every puff of temptation to be blown away from the best of Rules, and surest Truth, and to sneak into a corner that I may hugg that vanity and froth, that hath nothing in it of truth or goodness, so that I must subscribe to this accusation, and confess my self to be vain and foolish in every thing, and wise in nothing; For could any but a fool slink away so often out of the presence of his dearest friend to purchase nothing but displeasure and mischief? Surely, I have reason to

cry

cry for wisdom, and lift up my voice for understanding; to search for it as silver, and dig for it as for hid treasure, for how should God or men endure me, or I my self be able to bear with my vanity and folly?

Thirdly, Mankind stands charged with great uncleanness and filthiness. He that was made innocent without fault or spot, is turned into dirt and filth, for mankind are all gone aside, *they are altogether become filthy*, *Psal.* 14. 3. So that the best of men too truly cry out, *We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses as filthy rags*, *Isa.* 64. 6. Sin, which is the greatest filthiness and defilement hath made its seat and residence in our hearts, so that from thence proceeds that which defiles the man, *Matth.* 15. 18, 19.

Mediator. How loathsome is man in this lapsed state? I find my body hath many vents and sinks

sinks whereby my corporal uncleanness passeth away, But is my soul such a nasty loathsome thing? O what confounding news is this! There is no such evil in the world, as to have to do with Satan, for by familiarity with that unclean spirit, our hearts have taken that infection that the filth that flows thence drops from us every where, to render us loathsom in his sight, that is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity: And I, whither shall I go? or what shall I doe? To run or turn from God, is to be undone without remedy, and if I goe to him, (who am so unclean) Will he not say, *It is iniquity, even your solemn meeting, and when you make many prayers I will not hear?* *Isa.* 1. 13, 14, 15. O how doe the vermin of evil thoughts swarm in my heart, and corrupt my whole man! I have reason to cry out *Unclean, unclean.* But seeing there is a fountain opened to wash in, *for sin and for uncleanness,* I am highly

highly concerned to haſten thither, and will pray, *Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindneſs, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my tranſgreſſions, Waſh me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanſe me from my ſin, for I acknowledge mine iniquity, and my ſin is ever before me*, Pſal. 51. 1, 2, 3. Purge me, waſh me, take away iniquity, for mine uncleanneſs thereby is intolerable.

4ly. Mankind is charged with great forgetfulneſs. God made in every man a Treaſury to lay up and retain divine truths, but this is ſo weakned that theſe ſlip out, and the Devil ſteals them away, *Luk.* 8. 12. Hence God chargeth his people, that they have forgotten him dayes without number, *Jer.* 2. 32. And as for wicked men, God is not all their thoughts, *Pſal.* 10. 4. And this forgetfulneſs is in them when they have the

strongest obligations to remember him, as when God is shewing them favour, *Psal.* 106. 21. *They forgat God their Saviour*, who did great things for them, And when they are in straits and think of nothing but how to be delivered, yet none saith, Where is God my maker, who gives songs in the night, *Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, or maketh us wiser than the fowls of the heaven? Job* 35. 10, 11. Nay, though they need counsel and help, therefore the Lord saith, *Isa.* 30. 1. They ask counsel, *but not of me, and cover with a covering but not of my Spirit*, Mankind is very forgetfull of what he is most concerned to remember.

Meditation.

Lord, what a vexation is it to hear the report of our own wretchedness! And yet, who can deny these accusations? I was made capable of retaining divine things but my

my memory is as a leaking vessel that lets out the precious liquor and retains little but froth and filth. I have often heard and been told that God fils heaven and earth, *Jer.*23.24. ponders the heart, *Prov.* 21.2. weighs the spirits, *Prov.*16.2. knows the things that come into our mind, every one of them, *Ezek.* 11. 5. Is acquainted with my down-lying and up-rising, and all my words and ways, in the day and in the dark, *Psal.* 139. 2, 3, 4. And yet how doe I forget this, night and day, at home and abroad, alone and in company, and live as if I had not known it? Yea, when I make it my business to worship him, how apt am I to forget before whom I am, and what I am doing? Sinful wretch that I am! I forget my faults, to be humbled for them, My vowes and promises to perform them, my heart and soul to keep it with all diligence, I forget mine weakness and danger, and though I am told over

and over, often and every where of my duty and danger, yet my heart lets it slip, I can remember little to my good or profit. O God write thy law in my heart, and let the word of Christ dwell in me richly, and let thy Holy Spirit bring it to my remembrance, for I am a very forgetfull creature.

5ly, Great deceitfulness and unconstancy is charged on mankind. We are like *Reuben*, unstable as water, that runs away as soon as it is poured down. So that God saith, *The heart of man is deceitful above all things, Jer.* 17. 9. there is no parallel to it. And *Israel* who lay under the strongest obligations to fidelity with God, did too fully make this good, *For they flattered God with their mouth, and lyed to him with their tongue, for their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his Covenant*, Psal. 78. 36, 37. And they said We will not transgress. *Jer.* 2. 20. and all that the Lord commands

we will doe, Ex.24.3,7. Yet they ſtarted aſide like a deceitfull bow, Hoſ.7.16. And we are no better, but as in water *face anſwereth to face, ſo the heart of man to man*, Prov.27.19.

Meditation.

Who is able to conceive what a depth of deceit mans heart is? I may tremble to bring in mine evidences, for if I bring my heart to God in a duty, it is ſtarted aſide and gone in an inſtant. O the many fair promiſes, ſolemn vows, and deep ingagements that with tears and prayers have been made to God, that vaniſh in the making, and have been loſt in the uttering! And how vain, wandring, and unſtable is mine own heart! I have been apt to perſwade my ſelf, that my earneſt deſires, fervent prayers, ſolemn profeſſion, and ſad complaints might have been credible witneſſes of a ſteady and ſtable ſpirit, and yet how ſoon have I found in my ſelf diſagreeing thoughts and actions? So that I have reaſon to

look upon my past life with grief and shame, and upon my heart at present with distrust and jealously, and to pray always, Let my heart, O Lord be sound in thy statutes, and renew a stable spirit within me.

6ly. Great dulness and unteachableness attends us. Man, that was made a living soul, and quick in apprehension, is since the fall become dull and heavy. Hence the Prophet cryes out, *To whom shall I speak, or give warning that they may hear? Behold their ear is uncircumcised that they cannot hearken*, Jer. 6. 10. And the Lord complains that he hath sent all his servants the Prophets, rising early and sending, but they hearkned not, *Jer.* 35. 14. God raised up Prophets of all ranks of men, some were Kings, as *David* and *Solomon*; some Princes, as *Moses*; some of the Royal family, as *Isaiah*; some of the Priesthood, as *Jeremiah*; some herd-men, as *Amos*, and

and many of the ſons of the Prophets. Theſe delivered their meſſages in divers manner, ſome with tears, others with dreadfull threats, ſome with moving inſinuations, others with great and precious promiſes, And God was pleaſed to multiply viſions, and uſe ſimilitudes, *Hoſ.* 12. 10. but men are dull of hearing, and little moved or prevailed with.

Meditation.

Alas, how may my heart bleed to conſider how much I am concerned in this accuſation? Often and long I heard divine truths before I underſtood them, and when after many calls, repetitions, joggings, awakenings and divine motions, I came to receive ſome illumination, how ſlow have I been to believe or comply? I could not without teaching have ſaid to God, Hallowed be thy name; and when I could ſay the words, my dulneſs kept me long from underſtanding them, and yet longer from a right praying: But

to be actually exercised in hallowing Gods name, *Hic labor, hoc opus*, when shall it be? I have been many years learning to exercise faith and repentance; but alas, what a poor proficient am I herein? It must be by the mighty power of God alone that I must attain salvation: For though God sets thousands and ten thousands of mercies to trice and draw up my heart to him, and presents many necessities to urge me, shews me many dreadfull and affrighting dangers to threaten me, sets mine own conscience upon me to smite and accuse me, and lays infinite love and unspeakable glory before me, to allure and provoke me; yet I scarce goe a snails pace in the way of salvation, so that my dulness were incredible to report, if experience did not manifest it. *O Lord, teach me the way of thy statutes, Give me understanding, make me to goe in the path of thy Commandments, Incline my heart to thy Commandements, and*

quicken me in thy wayes, Pſal. 119. 33,34,35,36,37.

Seventhly, Frowardneſs and oppoſition to good is ſaid to dwell in us. Frowardneſs is not onely bundled up in our hearts when we are children to our natural parents, but when we are grown up, it ſhews it ſelf to our heavenly father. Hence *Iſrael* is called, A froward generation, *Deut.* 32. 20. that were never pleaſed, and the carnal mind, is called enmity againſt God, *Rom.* 8. 7. inſomuch as the natural man receives not the things of God, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. He receives them not in his underſtanding, rightly to diſcern them, nor into his will to chuſe them, nor into his affections to deſire them or delight in them: Yea ſuch is the oppoſition in him to goodneſs that he is charged with an unwillingneſs to good or wilfulneſs in evil, ſo that men are ſaid to ſet themſelves in a way that is not good, *Pſal.* 36. 4. and under afflictions to make their faces

harder than a rock, and refuse to return *Jer.* 5. 3. and that they will not frame their doings to return to God, *Hos.* 5. 4. and if favour be shewn to them, they will not learn righteousness, nor will they see, though Gods hand is lifted up against them, *Isa.* 26 10. 11. so opposite is the heart to God.

Medit. How intolerable is a froward and contradicting spirit, and how justly offensive to God & man? Such render themselves unworthy not only of love, but of pity; and yet how common is that evil temper of the *Israelites* in the world, that when God gives men their own desires they are not observant of him, nor estranged from their lusts, *Ps.* 78. 29, 30. nor turn to God when he is wroth and smites, but go on frowardly in the way of their heart, *Isa.* 57. 17. And can I excuse my self from this perverseness? Surely nothing but the patience of God could have born with, and forborn me all this while, whose frowardness is so great under

all providences; for I have had many plain discoveries made of the divine will, many gracious offers and invitations, and many calls, but I find such opposition within, that I find my self averse to avoid that which I am convinced is evil, and much opposition to perform those things, that I would not for all the world should be undone when God shall call me. God hath been all my dayes striving with me, but O the frowardness of my heart! If by divine grace my heart be moved and melted to an ingenuous confession of my frowardness and opposition of God, yet apt I am to renew my sin in the next words or actions. I cannot but acknowledge an opposition in my nature to good, refusing what I ought to chuse. And if this contradicting frame of spirit be not by grace conquered, I cannot expect that if God dwells in light and glory, but I must dwell in darkness and contempt, and if he dwell in the

higheſt heaven, I muſt dwell in the loweſt Hell. O God ſlay this enmity, melt my will into thy will, caſt down every imagination and reaſoning, and every high thing in me, that exalts it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt. *2 Cor.* 10, 5.

Eightly, Univerſal evil is charged on mankind. They are ſaid to be univerſally corrupt, for God ſaid *That every imagination of mans heart is onely evil continually*, Gen. 6. 5. and that it is thus with him from his youth, *Gen.* 8. 21. and his heart is deſperately wicked, *Jer.* 17. 9. So that we are ſaid to be all children of wrath by nature, *Epheſ.* 2. 3. and tranſgreſſours from the womb, *Iſa.* 48. 8. And as their inward part abounds and is filld with evil principles and diſpoſitions, ſo we read that their throat is an open ſepulchre ſtreaming forth its noiſomneſs in words, and that the poyſon of

Aſps

Asps is under their lips, *Rom.* 3. 13. and all their members as ready instruments to act sin, so that, as evil is ever present with them, Rom. 7. 21. so *there is none that doth good, no not one*, Ps. 14. 3. So that mens thoughts, words, and actions, are for matter, manner or end continually evil, till grace renew and change them.

Meditation. Lord, what a confounding accusation is this, or what shall I now answer? I have formerly thought it hard to excuse my heart of evil, and been ready to comfort my self, that my heart was better than my behaviour, and my thoughts and intentions, than my words and actions; But since I have read the divine discoveries of the state of man in the holy writings, and seriously observed mine own state, I am so far convinced, that I must say that Gods testimonies are very true & sure. What can be more dreadfull or confounding than to hear that my heart, that is infinite in

pro-

production, brings forth nothing but evil? And yet, vile wretch that I am, I cannot deny it, but that evil thoughts commonly throug in upon me, and like a torrent carry me away, and keep me either in a hurry, or discomposure to good. I finde such a bottomless depth of evil within, and so many faults in my words and works, and all my faculties and members so depraved and apt to evil, that I have all reason to loath and abhorre my self, and to repent in dust and ashes; for when I see evil so abounding within, what can I think but mine inward part is very wickednes? I see it is necessary that I cast my self down at the feet of God in the greatest abasement of my self, and beg and pray with all earnestness that I may be born again, grafted into Christ, and made a new creature, that old things may pass away, and all may become new in me, for how shall I endure my self in this loathsome state, or think that

God

God can love or own me, or heaven receive me in so vile and curſed a ſtate as ſin hath brought me? And now what a monſter of wickedneſs, and what a heap of dung and filthineſs doe I ſee my ſelf? who deſerve to be rejected and loathed of all the creation, but much more by him that gives me this account of my ſelf; Surely I am bound to admire his patience and bounty to me, who ſo juſtly deſerve everlaſting contempt; Is it not wonderful that any place on this ſide hell ſhould entertain ſo vile a wretch? And now how can I chooſe but bluſh and be aſhamed to liſt up mine eyes to heaven, who have ſo much of hell within me, and to abhorre my ſelf whoſe nature is ſo corrupted? Poor creature, theſe evils have been with me from my birth, and are ſo familiar with me that I have need to beg and pray night and day without ceaſing to the Almighty for help and pity, that I may be delivered from

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the pravity of my nature, and so carry in me the sense of mine own vileness, that I might be melted into a ready and hearty compliance to his holy will, and seeing in me, that is in my flesh dwells no good thing, but evil is ever present with me, that I may not be such a fool as to trust in mine own heart, or lean to mine own understanding, for my nature is altogether become corrupt.

SECT. II.

Mankind is infested with mortal enemies.

WHen we have viewed and reviewed our own selves, and seen all these evils and blemishes in us, we may look about us, and and entertain our selves with more awakening, afflicting, and affrightning matter, considering our enemies

mies which are great and mighty, three to one, commonly known by the name of the Devil, the World, and the flesh, which fight and war against us, sometimes covertly, sometimes openly, but always maliciously and with deadly hatred.

First, Satan, with all that hellish Crew of damned spirits, is an enemy to be dreaded, that for cruelty is called *Apollion, Rev.* 9. 11. For subtilty the old Serpent, *Rev.* 12. 9. For poysonousness, a Dragon; for rage a roaring Lion, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. For number, Legion, *Mark* 5. 9. And for his dominion and interest, is called Principalities, Powers, and the Prince of this world, *Eph.* 6. 12. *Joh.* 14. 30. He is so full of rage and enmity, that he is ever contriving and endeavouring our ruine. And though he is chained up that he cannot lay violent hands on us, yet he is so crafty and subtil that he makes the greatest part of the world dance after

after his pipe; He is a loud liar, but tels his lyes with such confidence and impudence, and backs them with such plausible pretences, and then hath the world and the flesh so ready for his vouchers, that men are apt to think themselves bound to believe him, and are soon chimed in to receive his corrupt wares, and be joyn'd with fables, and feed on ashes, rejecting that which is good, that now they think they need neither Scriptures, ordinances, law or Gospel; nor account any thing comparable to the pleasures of sin. He is a cunning fowler, who lays his snares every where, and in every thing to entrap us, And by his lime-twigs of profit or pleasure hold us fast till we become his prey; yea he shoots his fiery darts of lust, envy wrath and the like, that fils us with such heat and venome, that we are kept in a constant fever and fervour of spirit to evil, and in a distemper and continual discomposure to serve

God

God, or intend our own ſecurity, He deviſeth miſchief continually, ſuggeſteth it artificially and deceives us ſubtilly. We are no where, nor no time ſafe from his aſſaults and temptations. He ever watcheth for advantages to do us hurt, and hath this advantage commonly, that he tempts unſeen, and never puts his name to his doctrines or devices, but fathers them on God.

Secondly, The world is a dreadfull enemy. We are in our enemies countrey, and Satan the Prince of this world hath the men, and the things thereof much at his ſervice. Firſt the men of the world, Theſe in all relations and conditions are often apt inſtruments to undoe us. *Eve* in Paradiſe, *Gen.* 3.6. *Lots* daughters in the Cave, *Gen.* 19. 36. The Princes of *Iſrael*, that were famous in the congregation, men of renown; engage the people in rebellion and mutiny, *Numb.* 16. 20.

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The world hath men for all purposes to ensnare us, False Apostles, 2 *Cor.* 11.13. False Prophets, 2 *Pet.* 2.1. False teachers, and false brethren, *Gal.* 2.4. all furnished to corrupt us with evil principles, and by their sleights and cunning craftiness they lye in wait to deceive, *Eph.* 4. 14. The world hath also men of parts, power and policy, such as *Jeroboam*, *Absalom* and *Ahitophel*, to promote and carry on politick designs, and steal away the hearts of men from truth, peace and righteousness. By some it draws, and by others it drives men from the right way. We are often made a prey by friends and enemies, by acquaintance and strangers, by Rulers and Relations, and there are brethren under every guise and profession that are supplanters.

2ly, The things of the world are no less dangerous. Its profits, pleasures and honours, on the one hand, and its frowns contempt and persecution on the other hand, are

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all strong & dangerous temptations. So that riches and poverty, love and hatred; Health and sickness; Honour and contempt; are all and each of them apt to undoe us, and we being weak and facile are in danger by all we see, hear or use.

Thirdly, The flesh is a dangerous enemie. This lusteth against the Spirit. Sin clings to us, and is, as it were, incorporated, and grown into our nature, so that a man void of divine principles is called a naturall man, 1 *Cor.*2.14. And such as walk after their lusts, are said to walk as men, 1 *Cor.*3.3. Sin is called our members, *Col.*3.5. *A law in our members*, *Rom.*7.23. Our flesh, *Gal.*5.24. Our selves, *Rom.*6.6. And the deeds of the body, *Rom.*3.13. So that its interest is great, It ever stands up to confront God, and oppose all his commands, and makes use of every thing to do us mischief, it makes us intemperate in eating and drinking, vain in our apparel, proud in prosperity,

impatient in adversity, and is ever prompting us to abuse all that we have. It stocks our minds with innumerable vanities and lusts, fills our mouths with evil words, and employes our members in unworthy actions. It is against sobriety, charity and piety, and is ever contradicting God, and stands opposite to all good: And it never ceaseth day or night, at home or abroad, alone and in company, in youth and age, in civil or religious actions, to solicite us to evil. This is ever, and every where with us. So that no enemy can have more advantage, and it is so evil that it will loose no opportunity to undoe us.

Meditation.

I have heard and seen so much of my self, by reason of the pravity of my nature, that I am confounded; But this is enough to overwhelm me, without Divine assistance, to see my self so vile, and then environed with mortal enemies, and they such

such as without Divine power and help I cannot avoid. Enemies within me, without me, and about me, such as are conversant with me every moment, and design no less than my eternal ruine. I am waylaid every where, If I goe abroad, snares are laid in every step I take, If I stay at home I am worryed, If I get into company, I am diversly urged and tempted, and if I am alone, I am too often over-pow'red. I am every where haunted and in danger by them. Whither shall I flee? Alas, if I flee, they follow me, or goe along with me; What shall I doe? In every thing I do, they would make me undoe my self. To sit still or sleep is to betray my self. To sit and think onely of my danger, may bring desperation. I will apply my self to Almighty God, whose love and goodness moved him to inform me of mine enemies machination and malice, whose wisdom can confound their devices, and

whose

whose power is able to subdue them under me. My state is sad, I see war every where against me, perils and temptations beset me round. I fear the things that afflict me, and those that affect me, for every thing is by mine enemies made use of to ensnare me, My soul is among Lions, and I lye down among them that are set on fire, who have prepared a net for my feet, Deliver me, O God out of the hand of mine enemies, I flee unto thee to hide me.

SECT. III.

Mankind is in continual danger.

3ly. GOd is pleased to discover our state to be dismal by reason of danger. A sinner is in the worst state imaginable, being every moment in danger of utter ruine. Satan by sin hath got possession of us, and

and ſtockt us with ſinful principles and diſpoſitions, and he keeps his poſſeſſion by imploying us always in his ſervice. And by reaſon of ſin, we are liable to all ſorts of plagues, Firſt temporal, in our bodies, By diſeaſes pains, & death; In our relations, by croſſes, vexations, and diſappointments; In our names, by reproaches and contempt; In our eſtates, by loſſes and fruſtrations. Secondly, Spirituall; as impenitency, blindneſs of mind, ſtrong deluſions, ſtupidneſs, and a reprobate mind. Thirdly, Eternal, being every moment in danger of hell-fire: And the danger is the greater, 1. In that all theſe plagues are due, and may ſeize on the ſinner every moment, no reſpite or forbearance being promiſed. 2. In that they are threatned to come ſuddendly, and without remedy, *Prov.* 29.1. when men are not aware, and in an hour that they think not, *Matth.* 24. 50.

Yea, when they cry peace and safety, 1 *Thes.* 5. 3. So that God himself is against us, his Law is broken by us, and his curse pronounced; and for this, he is said to abhorre his own inheritance, *Psal.* 106. 40. to be fretted and provoked to anger, *Ezek.* 16. 43. most bitterly, *Hos.* 12. 14. So that he saith, *What hath my beloved to doe in my house, Jer.* 11. 15. And threatneth to pour upon them the fury of his anger, and to give them to the curse, and to reproaches, *Isa.* 43. 28. And what can be more dreadful?

Meditation.

Poor undone sinner that I am, was ever state more dismal, or danger greater? O how happy are ye, O Heavens and Planets, who never erred or were corrupted. And you, O brutes and plants who according to your nature serve your maker, while I, vile wretch, have provoked my maker, by breaking his laws, despised his goodness, by abusing

his

his creatures, and highly affronted him, by not believing his testimony. Alas, what heart can conceive, or tongue express the sadness of my state? My nature is depraved most miserably, and I am little affected with it. My enemies are implacable, and set to undoe me eternally, and yet I am apt to keep correspondency and familiarity with them. My God is offended, and threatneth most dreadfully, but O how little is my heart broken and humbled? Wo is me, I am in danger every moment; Any thing, every thing, visible or invisible may be my executioner, who stand condemned already; How can I forbear trembling when I read that God remembers all the wickedness of men, *Hos.* 7. 2. That their sin is bound up and hid, *Hos.* 13. 12. That their sins are laid up in store with God, and sealed up among his treasures, *Deut.* 32. 33, 34. That they are sealed and sewed up in a bag, *Job* 14. 17. And *written with a pen of*

iron, and the point of a Diamond, Jer. 17. 1. O how may confusion cover me in the sight of my dismal state? And now whither shall I go for pity, help or hiding? Surely there is nothing better for me, than to apply my self to God whom I have offended, and to cast my self at his feet to whom there is no parallel for pardoning sin, and pitying offendors, *Mic.* 7. 18. To him will I hasten for help and deliverance from my deadly enemies, who, whether I sleep or wake, or what ever I doe, are instant and earnest night and day, all manner of waies, by force or fraud to destroy me; He can help me against my vitiated and corrupted nature, and evil inclinations, yea from the curse of the law, and the wrath that I have deserved, and blot out my sins for his names sake. I will therefore go and confess my sins before him, and lay before him my trouble, and cast my self wholly upon him

him, and pray that he would pity a vile sinner, but yet the work of his own hands, and that he would keep me now and ever, here and every where from evil, And make me his servant speedily, throughly and constantly, for without his grace to pardon, preserve and purifie me I must perish eternally.

CHAP. II.

Of God.

WE have now in some measure seen the sad and lamentable state of mankind in their Apostacy, and that upon the testimony of the eternal God, who cannot be deceived; and may find it in our selves too apparent. It is therefore necessary to enquire whether there be any remedy for us, or hopes

of deliverance, And because our sin hath sunk us below the reach of any created power or arm to to save us, it is meet to acquaint our selves with God, and here we may behold his Essence, and the Persons in the God head.

SECT. I.

Of the Divine Essence.

THat God is, is so obvious that we can neither look out any way, nor turn in and behold our selves, but we may see the tokens of his wisdom, power and providence in the being and ordering of all things; but what God is, is not so apparent, because he can neither be comprehended, nor fully apprehended by a finite creature. Therefore he is commonly set forth to us by negatives, As he is called, Infinite, that is without bounds; Immutable, without

without change, being never older wiser, weaker, but ever the same; invisible, not seen; indivisible, without parts; Independent, and the like. So that we may say, God is an infinite, independent Spirit, or spiritual being. He is; but he is a spirit, not a body; an infinite spirit, without bounds of time, being from everlasting to everlasting, *Psal.* 90. 2. without bounds of place, filling heaven and earth, *Jer.* 23. 24. and without bounds of power, being Almighty. And he is independent, being infinitely compleat and perfect in himself, needing nothing, but upholding all things, who hath declared himself to be good, gracious, merciful, just, and true, not as qualities, but essential properties, for whatsoever is in God is God.

Meditation.

How impossible is it that the cockle-shell of my finite capacity should contain the ocean of his infinity? But surely I am bound to ac-

knowledge and adore him, whom I cannot comprehend. How inconceivable is his greatness? being every where, and yet ever with me, within me, without me, and knowing all things past, present, and to come, by one act of his understanding? O that I may ever have him in my sight, who can never be out of his presence! I had need be full of eyes within and without, and never to think that by shutting mine eyes upon him, I am any whit the more out of his sight, whose greatness is unsearchable. Gods independency discovers to me his sufficiency, and inciteth me to lean upon him, when I see that he can without the least diminution or injury to himself or any other, conferre on me all the happiness that my nature is capable of receiving, and can make me capable of receiving greater things than I can conceive or apprehend. Surely to know him is eternal life, *John* 17.3. to be partaker

taker of his loving kindness *is better than life*, *Ps.*63 3. *and in his presence is fulness of joy and pleasure for evermore*, *Ps.*16.11. O God fill me with joy by the light of thy countenance, and bring me to know and enjoy thee.

SECT. II.

Of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

ALmighty God in the holy Scriptures is pleased to testifie that there are three that bear record in heaven; *The Father, The Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one*, 1 *Joh.*5.7. So that though the Divine Essence be entirely one, yet the persons in the Godhead are three.

First, God the Father is the fountain of Life, from whom all things receive their being and maintenance,

who having absolute sovereignty over all, and full power to dispose of all his creatures, was pleased to favor mankind so far, as to appoint the heavens and planets to shed out their influences for their benefit, and to cause the aire, winds, clouds, fowls, beasts and plants, yea the earth and water, and all that are in them, to be serviceable to them. And having the full right and power of imposing laws, and appointing service to man, he was pleased to engage him to perfect obedience upon the greatest penalty, which covenant on mans part being violated by his disobedience, he and all his, fall under the displeasure and wrath of God, and the curse of the Law, and by his sin brought upon himself a double mischief, First of guilt, whereby he stands liable to death temporal, spiritual and eternal. Secondly, Of pollution, whereby he is loathsom to God, apt to all evil, and both unfit and unable for all divine service.

But

But God the Father out of his infinite grace and love to mankind in this dismal state, is pleased to discover sufficiency of Grace in himself to recover us first from our guilt, in revealing and giving his own son, the second Person in the Godhead to bear and take away our sin. And secondly, In sending the Holy Ghost, the spirit of Grace, to mortifie our lusts, regenerate and sanctifie us, and to enable and fit us for service.

Secondly, God the Son. This second person in the Godhead was at first but darkly discovered to the world under the name of the seed of the woman, (the woman had brought sin into the world without the mans advice, and she was promised to bring forth a Saviour without the mans help.) He was promised to be a Prophet; A sin-offering, that by his blood and death should reconcile us, The seed of *Abraham*, and of *David*, and his Kingdom

should have no end, and many the like predictions were of him, But when the fulness of time was come, that he was born into the world, an Angel publisheth his birth to the Jewish shepherds, *Luk.* 2. 9, 10. and a star shews it to the Gentiles, *Mat.* 2. 2. After his birth, *Simeon*, *Anna*, and *John* the *Baptist* by divine appointment, point him out to that Age, A voice from heaven at his baptism and transfiguration, declares him; And he was declared to be the son of God with power by the miracles, wonders, and signs done by him, in his life, death, resurrection, ascension, and mission of the Holy Ghost. This sacred person was (not meer man, endowed with eminent gifts, as *Moses* and *Elias*, but) God manifested in the flesh, no other in Essence than the Father and the Holy Ghost, but another person, who being God from Eternity did in time assume the humane nature, and all the miserable sinless infirmities and affecti-

affections of man, and was made under the Law to fulfil it for us, for we all *like sheep have gone astray*, and *turned every one to his own way*, *and the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all*; *He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and* by *his stripes we are healed*, *Isa.* 53. 5, 6. Therefore he is said, to bear *our sins in his own body on the tree*, 1 Pet. 2. 24. To suffer *for us in the flesh*, 1 Pet. 4. 1. To be made *sin for us*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. And *a curse for us*, Gal. 3. 13. And *to give his life a ransom for many*, *Mat.* 20. 28. And so to take away the sin of the world, *Ioh.* 1. 29. and to reconcile us by his blood, *Col.* 1. 20, 21. And to effect and compleat our redemption, he bears the office of a Propher, to teach us by his word and Spirit; Of a Priest, to make attonement and intercession for us, and to bless us; And of a King, to subdue

due our enemies and corruptions, secure our persons and confer dignities on us. *God was in Christ reconcileing the world to himself, not imputing their iniquities*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. So that by Christ the curse of the Law is removed from a believer, his guilt is taken away, and his enemies subdued and conquered,

Meditation.

How unsearchable is the love and goodness of the Almighty, who though so perfect in himself that nothing can adde to him, or detract from him, yet is pleased (having made man a depending creature) to engage and incline all the creation to guard, regard and serve him; for are not all the Angels ministring spirits for their sakes? And all the visible things above, below, and about us, are made serviceable to us. And I, worthless sinner am not lost in the crowd of his creatures, but as his hands made & fashioned me, so doth his providence secure and supply me,

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as if he had no more to look unto. And though I am of such a depraved nature, and guilty of numberless sins, that I give him just occasion of wrath every moment, yet his patience and goodness abounds to me, and his mercies towards me are more than the sand, though my sins are as many as my thoughts, and more than my hairs. But when I see him pitying a vile sinner, with such unspeakable and infinite love, as not to spare his onely begotten Son, but give him to assume my nature, to sanctifie it, and to be made under the Law, to satisfie it, and bear my sins, to make my peace and redeem me. This is love so large, so wonderful, so infinite, that I am amazed and stand bound to admire it to Eternity. What a stupendious mystery of love is this? that when the Almighty is so offended with sin, and so affronted by sinners, he should find a ransom for them, and prepare a body for his

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onely Son, that he might become a sacrifice to reconcile and redeem them by his blood and death? Lord, who can hear or think of this without astonishment! Oh how unspeakably dreadful was my state that required so great a price to redeem me, & surely that love was love that passeth knowledge, that would lay it down for such a vile and worthless creature. When I consider how infinitely pleased the persons in the Godhead were in each other from Eternity, and what an inconsiderable thing man is to the Eternal God, who is not onely a thing contemptible, but by his frailty, folly and frowardness, a constant provocation, how can I forbear crying out, *Lord, what is man that thou art mindfull of him, or the son of man, that thou shouldest so visit him*? Or to say O the depth of the riches of divine Grace! This divine love may make unspeakable additions to my happiness till I am fil'd with joy and bliss,

but

but I can adde nothing to him, for, poor thing, I can but receive his goodneſs, and make ſome acknowledgements in ſome words and works that cannot profit him. O what a narrow ſoul have I, and how am I ſtraightned: when I look into this love for words to expreſs it, or capacity to comprehend it? Behold it, O ye Angels, that excel in underſtanding, and look into it to his eternal praiſe and glory. Doth the Son of God bear our ſins, and ſatisfie the Law for us? This is love like the infinite one, whoſe ways are unſearchable. Surely this love ſhould ſet my ſoul, and all the world in a maze, and ſo tranſport us, as to change us into Saints, God purchaſed us with his own blood, *Acts* 20. 28. The Lord of glory was crucified, and dyed 1 *Cor.* 2. 8. that ſuch as were unworthy to live, might live in eternal happineſs. O how am I concerned with all my mind to intend him, with all my ſoul to love him,

and

and with all my strength to serve him, and to behold him by faith till my heart is melted into love to my brethren, and molded into the form of his word! I want skill and strength to praise him, *Bless the Lord, ye his Angels, that excel in strength, that doe his Commandments, hearkning to the voice of his word, Bless ye the Lord, all ye his hosts, ye ministers of his that do his pleasure, Bless the Lord all his works, in all places of his dominion, bless the Lord O my soul,* Psal. 103. 20, 21, 22. *Blessing, honour, glory, and power be to him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever, Amen,* Rev. 5. 13.

Thirdly, God the Holy Ghost who is the giver of all spiritual life, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is furnished with All-sufficiency of Grace and power to regenerate, renew and relieve us, who are by sin, corrupt and loathsome. He cometh with

with light to open and enlighten the eyes of our understanding, *Ephes.* 1. 18. To reprove and convince the world of sin, *Joh.* 16. 8. To guide us into all truth, *Joh.* 16. 13. and deliver us from mistakes, and to help our memories to recover and retain truth, *Joh.* 14. 26. He comes to strengthen us with might in our inner man, *Ephes.* 3. 16. To help our infirmities, *Rom.* 8. 26. To adopt us, comfort us, and bear witness that we are the sons of God, *Rom.* 8. 15, 16. To regenerate and renew us, *Tit.* 3. 5. To enable us to mortifie the deeds of the body, *Rom.* 8. 13. In a word, the Holy Ghost commeth to make us the temples of God, and his habitation, *Ephes.* 2. 22. and to abide with us for ever, *Joh.* 14. 16. And now what is our request to Almighty God, or what can be thought on, said or done more for undone sinners that they be delivered? Behold all

things

things are ready on Gods part in order to our recovery and happiness.

Meditation. What heart-ravishing and amazing Love is manifested in the gift of the Holy Ghost! Shall a heart and nature so leavened and corrupted with sin be entred into and cleansed by the holy Spirit of God, and a soul so apt to evil, be his habitation, who brings sufficiency of Grace to cure all ayls, and supply all defects? This needs divine assistance to apprehend, or believe such love. The Holy Spirit comes with true light to inform me, with choicest graces to enrich me, and with the armour of God to defend me. He cometh with the sword of the word to slay my lusts and enemies, with mighty power, to strengthen me, and with divine consolations, to revive and comfort me. He will shew me the truth, lead me into truth and convey me to glory. What unexpected love is this, that

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a ſinner ſhould be made a ſaint, And an enemy, adopted, and made an heir of glory? Who can chuſe but wonder to hear and ſee, that he that could read and hear nothing but threats and curſes in the Law as his due deſert, ſhould be prevented. So by love, as to be born of God, renewed by his Spirit, and enriched withal ſpiritual bleſſings? And the ſoul that hath been an old habitation of vile luſts, and haunted by devils, ſhould, by the regenerating and ſanctifying power of the Holy Ghoſt, become the temple of God? Never was the like heard that creatures faln ſo low, and become ſo ſordid and contemptible, ſhould be ſo beloved, regarded and dignified. I am greatly concerned to be raviſhed with the love of God, and to pray that I may know the Spirit of God, ſo as never to reſiſt his workings, or quench his motions, and endeavour to be ſo far from grieving him, as to devote my ſelf heartily, wholly and con-

constantly to him and be ever ready to follow his guidance.

And now what a bottomless depth of Grace and Goodness do I see in God, Though sin abounds in us yet grace doth in him much more abound, *Rom.* 5.19. In him is relief and help in all necessities, for I find in him ground of hope, first against the pravity of my nature in regard of all the forementioned evils, as first, Sin hath blinded mine eyes, but Christ is the light of the world, and he is come a light, that they that believe in him should not abide in darkness, Joh. 12. 46. Secondly, I am fooliſh and vain, but Christ is the wisdom of God, 1 *Cor.* 1.24. and of God he is made unto us wisdom, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. and he hath given us the holy Scriptures, which are able to make us wise to salvation through faith in Christ, 2 *Tim.* 3.15. 3dly, I am an unclean thing, but the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all iniquity, 1 *Joh.* 1. 8. Fourthly, I

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am a forgetful creature, But the Spirit of God is a faithful monitor and promptor, for he shall teach us all things, and bring all things to our remembrance, *Joh.* 14.26. 5ly, My heart is deceitful and unconstant, but there is help in God, for he shall *strengthen us with might by his spirit in the inner man*, *Ephes.* 3. 16. *And the God of all Grace shall stablish, strengthen and settle us*, 1 *Pet.* 5. 10. 6ly, My spirit is dull; But Christ is a quickning spirit, 1 *Cor.* 15. 45. Seventhly. There is much frowardness and crookedness in my nature, But Christ is exalted to give repentance, *Acts* 5. 31. And the spirit of grace makes men humble and pliable for the love of God, which is melting and mollifying, is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, *Rom.* 5. 5. Eightly, My thoughts are naturally evil continually, but the very God of peace can sanctifie me wholly, and preserve my whole spirit, soul and body

blameless unto the comming of our Lord, 1 *Thes.*5.23. Ninthly, Though there be an unwillingness in me to good, yet he worketh *both to will and to do of his good pleasure*, *Phil.*2. 13. And the spirit can renew and sanctifie me, so that I see that all things are possible with God in order to my cure.

2. He can deliver me from my deadly enemies, that compass me about; for Christ by death hath overcome *him that had the power of death that is, the devil*, *Heb.*2.14. and tells his people that they *shall tread Satan under their feet*, *Rom.*16.20. He also hath overcome the world, *John* 16.33. and by faith we also shall get victory over it, 1 *John* 5.4. And for the flesh, this also is crucified by faith in him, *for if any man be in Christ he is a new creature*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. and *they that are Christs have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts*, *Gal.*5.24. So that we may look unto him and be saved, *Isa.* 45.

22,

and rejoyce in the Lord alwayes, Phil. 4. 4.

3. He can free us from all dangers, for the handwriting that was against us is blotted out, *Col.* 2. 14. the curse is removed, *Gal.* 3. 13, 14. and we are not under the condemning power of the Law, but under Grace, *Rom.* 6. 14. We are made new creatures, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. are not our own, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19. but bought with a price, and are so valued, that we are become Gods peculiar treasure, *Exod.* 19. 5. his inheritance, *Deut.* 9. 26. his children, and heirs with Christ, *Rom.* 8. 16, 17. and so honoured, that we are as a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, *Isa.* 62. 3. and have a kingdom prepared for us, *Mat.* 25. 34. even such a one as cannot be shaken or moved, *Heb.* 12. 28. And God is pleased to make an everlasting Covenant with us, *Isa.* 55. 3. and we are by the mighty power of God, kept through faith unto salvation, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. And

ſhall any thing now detain me from acquainting my ſelf with God, or devoting my ſelf to him? Surely, I am bound night and day, now and ever to meditate of his love, and to embrace him with all my ſoul, and yield up my ſelf wholly and heartily to ſerve him in obeying his commands, and to honour him by believing his teſtimonies alwayes.

CHAP. III.

Of the Covenant of Grace.

ALmighty God out of his unſearchable and bottomleſs love and good will is pleaſed, notwithſtanding our vileneſs, to take us into friendſhip, and enter into a new Covenant with us, called The Covenant of Grace, wherein he doth engage himſelf freely to be our God, and to take us for his people, and if we

we shall glorifie him as God, and receive Christ as our Lord and saviour, and be obedient to him, he will forgive our iniquities, and give us his Holy Spirit to plant all grace in us, whereby our judgements shall be rightly informed, our lives reformed, and we conformed to the image of his Son, And though we are unable to perform perfect obedience which the Law requires, and are weak in that repentance and faith that the Gospel requires, yet he will in Christ accept of our sincere endeavours, and is pleased to encourage us by many precious promises, & doth appoint us the use of diverse ordinances as means for the begetting and strengthning grace in us, and will himself never fail nor forsake us, if we cleave to him, and honour him as our God.

Meditation.

Into what an Ocean of love am I launched out, when I look upon the gracious dealings of God, who

treats with such vile creatures, and intreates our reconciliation; yea engageth himself even his infinite wisdom, power, goodness, justice and truth, and all his creatures to work for our good, so that *Paul*, *Apollo* and *Cephas*, the world, life and death, *things present and things to come, all are ours*, 1 *Cor.* 3.22. His Son bears away our sins, *Joh.* 1.29. and his Spirit helps our infirmities, *Rom.* 8.26. and he will never leave nor forsake us, *Heb.* 13.5. And while I imbrace him by faith, and walk in obedience, The peace of God that passeth all understanding shall *engariſon* my heart and mind through Christ Jesus, φρουρήσει, *Phil.* 4.7. and multitudes of refreshing comforts shall flow into my soul from his precious promises. The blessings of this Covenant, are not onely temporal, but eternal, for Christ will give everlasting life, *Joh.* 10.28. ἀσάλευτον, A Kingdom that cannot be moved or shaken, *Heb.* 12.28. *An inheritance*

tance incorruptible, undefiled, that fades not away, reserved in the heavens, 1 *Pet.* 1. 4. and such happiness as the heart of man cannot conceive, 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. Which when I seriously consider, what spirit is left in me? and how am I surprized and amazed, at such unexpected and inconceivable grace and love? Surely I must give up, resign, and devote my self wholly and heartily to him, for what ear can hear, or eye see these things, and not affect the heart to astonishment, and provoke it to bind it self in thousands of bonds, and the strongest obligations to honour and serve him?

Quest. *What is our duty in order to the obtaining the blessings, comforts and priviledges of this Covenant of Grace?*

Ansfw. This free and infinite love of God doth oblige us to worship and honour him immediately according to the commandements of the first table, and mediately, according

to the Commandements of the second table, and binds us first to duties of piety to God. 2ly. Of charity to men. 3ly. Of vigilancy over our selves.

CHAP. IV.

Of Duties of Piety towards Gods.

THe Covenant of Grace doth oblige us to piety. And though in a large sence all acts of obedience to God are called Piety, yet here we take it in a strict sence, for that worship that is performed to God immediately, which is either called Natural or Internal worship, Or External and instituted, And first we shall treat of Natural or Internal worship, which consists in these and the like acts.

SECT.

SECT. I.

Of Internal worſhip.

1. IN believing God. As God is the fountain of life from whom we have our being, ſo he is the fountain of light, from whom we receive all truth, and certainty. Now this faith doth not onely conſiſt in believing that there is a God, but leads further to believe the infallibility of his teſtimony. Almighty God ſeeing mankind in a maze or wilderneſs, loſt, and not able to inform himſelf, nor wind out of his miſerable ſtate, was pleaſed out of his infinite goodneſs to inſpire his Prophets and Apoſtles, and alſo to ſend his ſon to diſcover his mind and will to the world, that mankind might be rightly informed, and he hath ſet his hand and ſeal to their Doctrine, confirming it with many infallible ſigns and miracles, and cauſing it to be written for our learning, All which he requires his peo-

ple to believe as certain & infallible.

Theſe ſacred writings contain in them ſome things myſterious, and hard to be underſtood, but the moſt neceſſary things are moſt plainly and familiarly ſet down. As that God is the maker and governour of all things. And Chriſt is the Meſſiah and ſeed promiſed, and that there is ſalvation in none other. Here is alſo diſcovered the ſtate of man by guilt, The duty of man to God, and the purpoſe and determination of God concerning him, manifeſted in his gracious promiſes or dreadful threatnings commonly annexed to his precepts; which relate to the life preſent, but eſpecially to the life to come, wherein ſuch peace, bliſs and glory as the heart of man cannot conceive, is promiſed to ſuch as love God believe in Chriſt, and keep his commandements, And ſuch affrighting and unſufferable contempt, plagues and torments as no tongue can expreſs to ſuch as

diſobey

diſobey him. Now all and every thing contained in theſe ſacred writings, God doth require to be received and entertained, as things of the greateſt certainty and infallibility, and not to be queſtioned or diſputed, for the word of the Lord endures for ever.

Meditation.

To queſtion or doubt of Gods faithfulneſs is a ſin dreadful to mention, but moſt horrid in commiſſion. Hath he ſaid, and ſhall he not make it good, *Num.*23.19. Nay let God be true, and every man a lyar, *Rom.* 3.4. It is utterly unreaſonable to believe he is God, and call in queſtion his teſtimony. Seeing therefore it hath pleaſed God to reveal his mind, and cauſe it to be written, and theſe ſacred writings are with me, as long as I have ears to hear, eyes to read, or an underſtanding to apapprehend, I am bound by the ſtrongeſt obligations imaginable to read, hear, mind and believe his

sayings, It is impossible for God to lye, *Heb.*6.18. neither is he as weak man, that he should repent, I had therefore better not be, than not believe his testimony. Lord increase my faith, *Thy testimonies are very sure, Psal.* 93.5. *Thy word is true from the begining, and every one of thy righteous judgements endureth for ever, Psal.*119.160.

2ly. We must worship God inwardly, by loving him. Love is that divine heat that softneth the heart into a pliableness to divine service with pleasure. We live in the constant aspect of divine goodness, and are ever receiving the pledges of his love and bounty; He is good in himself above all that we can conceive, and good to us above all that we can express. He is the God of our lives, health, wealth and salvation; His goodness is communicative to us, and all his creatures made serviceable and usefull for us; He gave us our souls and bodies, and their endow-

dowments; He gave his Son to redeem, reconcile and bless us, and to make continual intercession for us; And his Holy Spirit to regenerate, adopt, guide and comfort us, And can less than love with all the heart, soul, mind and strength be reasonably returned for such free and infinite love? Surely we should never cease to love him.

Meditation.

Never was any thing more just than that God, who is love it self, should be loved by us. He never forgets our necessities, wants and weakness, but is ever near with pity, relief and help, And shall we be unmindful of him? A vile creature I am, who deserved wrath as soon as I received my being, & dishonoured him before and since I knew him, and yet his thoughts towards me are more than can be numbred. How worthy is he of my heart and whole man, were it worth the tendering to him! I am his creation, his pur-

chaſe and habitation. How can I chuſe but love him, who keeps me ſo tenderly, ſupplyes me ſo liberally, and renews his mercies ſo conſtantly? Love in God, made God and man one perſon in Chriſt, and ſhall not love in me make me wholly devoted to God? O how ſhould I be enamoured in the ſight of his love, who bought me ſo dearly, forgave me ſo freely, and loved me ſo infinitely? Surely I am obliged to him beyond expreſſion, and bound to love him above meaſure, who embraceth me in his arms, and layes me in his boſom, whoſe unworthineſs and vileneſs is unſpeakable. How can I ſay I love my ſelf, if I doe not love him? Love is a powerfull thing, no labour can tire it, no torment overcome it, no priviledges damp it, but it is unwearyed in expreſſing it ſelf in words and actions. And ſhall not I manifeſt the ſame to God, by loveing him with all my underſtanding, in ſeeing him every where, with all my

my mind, thinking on him alwayes; with all my soul, reverencing him, and with all my strength serving him, and using my utmost to oblige all about me to love and serve him. Shed thy love abroad in my heart O God by thy Holy Spirit, and let the love of Christ constrain me to live to him that dyed for me.

3ly. We must worship God inwardly by fearing him. He is a great God, and a great King, in whose hand is our breath, *Dan.*5.23. and hath power to cast soul and body into hell, *Luk.* 12. 5. His name is glorious and fearfull, when he calls himself, *The Lord our God, Deut.* 28.58. Yea so holy and reverent is his name, *Psal.* 111. 9. that he will not hold him guiltless, but be very severe against him that takes his name in vain, *Exod.*20.7. There is an unspeakable distance betwixt an infinite God and a finite creature. Fear is a tribute that we should ever be

be paying to him. His greatneſs is infinite, his ſovereignty abſolute, and his power unlimited. Who would not fear to looſe an intereſt in him, or be affrighted with the thought of having him his enemy?

Meditation.

Shall not the greatneſs of the Almighty keep me in awe? Who ever hardned himſelf againſt God and proſpered? *Job* 9. 4. I had better have all the world againſt me than God. But his greatneſs is not diſcovered to me to affright me from him, but to keep me from offending him, and undoing my ſelf. The fear of the Lord is the greateſt wiſdom, for if fear ſtand ſentinel it will alwayes keep me armed againſt my mortal enemies, and in a continnal care to pleaſe God. I would not have that fear that inſlaves the ſoul, and makes it ſordid, but that which maintains a due reverence of God, and keeps a man clean. This fear of the

the Lord is a fountain of life, *Prov.* 14. 27. whereby I am continually incited to holineſs, and againſt ſin, and it is the greateſt treaſure to enrich and ſecure me. *Who would not fear thee O king of Nations? for to thee it appertains, Jer.* 10. 7. O Father, Hallowed be thy name, for thou art greatly to be feared in the aſſembly of thy ſaints, and to be had in reverence of all that are about thee, *Pſal.* 89. 7.

4ly. We muſt worſhip God by truſting in him. Should not a people truſt in and rely upon their God? He is the father of mercies, and the God of all conſolations, 1 *Cor.* 1. 3. Our ſtate requires his mercy to relieve and pity us, and his comforts to ſuſtain us. It is his will, and our greateſt honour, that we ſhould truſt in him, who is Allſufficient. There is none like him to pardon ſin, and give ſalvation, But in this our truſt we muſt abhorre both ſin and

ſloath

floath. His gracious Covenant encourageth us to truſt in him, but not to preſume or abuſe him.

Meditation.

I am ſo inſufficient of my ſelf that if I lean not on ſome ſufficient prop, I muſt fall to deſtruction; I am a depending creature, My body ſtands upon many crutches and ſhores, and cannot ſubſiſt without them, but my ſoul is ſo incredibly weak and feeble, that creature-helps are inſufficient to ſuſtain it, I were therefore a fool to think that theſe could ſupport me; It is God Almighty alone that can ſuſtain me, and yet my guilt and unworthineſs is ſuch, that I had not had confidence of ſo much favour, had he not in Chriſt declared himſelf reconciled, and bid me caſt my ſelf and my care upon him. I will therefore truſt in him as my Councellour to inform me, as my Lord to diſpoſe and command me, and my father to pity and bleſs me, His grace is ſufficient for me. I have

received

received much from him, but I am ſtill a weak and feeble thing, but though I am every where in want of ſomething, he requires me every where to lift up holy hands to him in prayer without wrath or doubting, 1 *Tim.*2.8. Can I be poor that have ſuch a ſtock to live upon, or fall that have ſuch a friend to lean upon? Indeed nature it ſelf tells me I muſt lean ſomewhere or ſink eternally, now ſhould I truſt to the broken reed of the creature, I ſhould be greatly guilty of folly. If I ſhould lean upon ſin, this were to make the devil my prop, which were the worſt of madneſs. I will therefore truſt in God through Jeſus Chriſt, following the guidance of his Spirit according to the word, ſo ſhall I be onely enabled to ſecure my ſelf and honour him, who hath ſaid to thoſe that truſt in him, I will never fail nor forſake you.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Of External worſhip.

Piety contains External or inſtituted worſhip. God requires the heart principally, but not onely: for he will have the whole man, and requires open and viſible worſhip, and therefore hath commanded us To hear his word, To pray To him, To ſanctifie the Sabbath, and celebrate Sacraments. And our piety muſt be evidenced in all theſe

Firſt. We muſt attend on Gods word. Sin entred at firſt into the Humane nature by the ears and eyes, and God hath appointed light and life to come in to us at the ſame doors, even by hearing and reading his ſacred truth contained in the Scriptures. This word is a light to inform us in this dark world, The card and compaſs to direct our paſſage in the ſea of dangers, and the ſword

ſword to defend us from our enemies. We are blind, but this is the eye-ſalve, *Rev.* 3. 18. to make us ſee; fooliſh, but this is able to make us wiſe to ſalvation, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. Weak, but this is the power of God to ſalvation, *Rom.* 1. 16. This is that incorruptible ſeed, of which we are begotten and born again, 1 *Pet.* 1. 23. The milk by which we grow and are nouriſhed, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. and the inſtrumental means of conveying, maintaining and ſecuring all grace. On this we muſt attend with underſtanding, acquainting our ſelves with it.

Secondly, with reverence, dreading it, as the word of the Eternal God, and ſtanding in awe of it, *Pſal.* 119. 161.

Thirdly, with faith, believing the ſufficiency and infallibility thereof.

Fourthly, With love, embracing, joying in it, and cleaving to it. And to help us to acquaintance with this word, God hath appointed officers

to

to attend on this very thing, and fitted them with gifts to interpret and discover to us the Divine will, and to be ever pressing and urging us instantly to evidence our selves to be the Lords, by receiving it as our rule, and meditating in it continually.

Meditation.

The Divine testimony is highly to be regarded, it being the greatest dignity and the highest trust to have Divine Oracles committed to us. This word is said to be given by inspiration of God, 2 *Tim.* 3. 16. called the Scripture of truth, *Dan.* 10. 21. The holy Scriptures, *Rom.* 1. 2. The true sayings of God, *Rev.* 19. 9. The word of Life, *Phil.* 2. 16. and the power of God to salvation, *Rom.* 1. 16. and am not I concerned to manifest the greatest reverence to, and esteem of it? Though I am a dark creature, it hath the power of illumination, *Psal.* 19. 8. though dull, it hath the power of quickning,

Psal.

Psal. 119. 50. and though foolish, it is able to make me wise, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. By the hearing of this, faith is wrought, *Rom.* 10. 17. peace is brought, Psal. 85. 8. and the Spirit of God is received, Gal. 3. 2. This word is powerfull, converting the soul, Psal. 19. 7. pure, cleansing the life, *Psal.* 119. 9. and precious, saving the soul, *Jam.* 1. 21. Here is light, truth and wisdom. God hath spoken, who can but hear? He hath written, who can but read? And shall not I be ever minding these sacred truths, from whence light and life doe flow? The word of God is a mine of treasure, more to be valued than thousands of gold and silver, and more to be desired than gold and much precious stones, *Psal.* 19. 10. ὑπὲρ χρυσίον λίθον τίμιον πολὺν, A hive of sweetness, sweeter than the honey and the honey-comb, a magazine of Armour to defend against all temptations and assaults. It is more than a *S*enate of Counsellors, for

for it is able to make us wiser than our enemies, or the ancient, Psal. 119. 98. This is a light shining in a dark place to be heeded, 2 Pet. 1. 19.

Of all rules, there is none so right, for it teacheth the fullest righteousness. Of all doctrines none so pure, for every word of God is pure; Of all advice none so sure, for the word of the Lord is tryed and never failed, but abides for ever, Surely, I will esteem it as the greatest and most pretious truth, cleave to it as the surest rule, and chuse it as the best heritage; Oh that it might dwell in me rightly! Write thy Law, O God, in my heart, and make it my meditation and practice night and day.

Secondly. Prayer is an ordinance wherein God will be worshipped. As God is pleased to speak to us in his word, so he gives us leave to speak to him by prayer, and seeing our backwardness, he multiplies his calls

calls to us; to ask, ſeek, knock, and pray alwayes, aſſuring us that he will hear our complaints and confeſſions with pity, and return our requeſts with gracious anſwers of peace and love. We are ſinners, whoſe faults and wants are more than can be numbred, but he declares himſelf an infinite God, and bids us ask great things, and he will give them freely. God doth ſometimes conferre favours unasked, but commonly to honour his own inſtitution, he will be enquired of to do what he intends, *Ezek.* 36. 37. Theſe our prayers are chiefly to be preſented to God publickly, but we muſt alſo pray at other times, when but two or three, and not neglect this duty ſecretly in our cloſets, *Mat.* 6. 6. yea at all times we ought to breath out ejaculations, which he will not reject, and his Holy Spirit helps with ſighs and groans which cannot be uttered, *Rom.* 8. 26. It is meet and neceſſary that our petitions

to

to God be uttered in apt and ſound words, which may either be preſcribed us by others, as *John* the Baptiſt, and our Saviour taught their diſciples, *Luk.* 11. 1. Or in words that have before been uſed by holy men, as our bleſſed Saviour on the Croſs, *Matth.* 27. 46. uttered the ſame words that *David* had done before, Pſal. 22. 1. *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me,* though he could have otherwiſe expreſſed himſelf, yea, his laſt words, *Luk.* 23. 46. were the ſame that had been uttered before, *Pſal.* 31. 5. *Into thy hands I commit my ſpirit.* Or our requeſts may be uttered, by wholeſome and ſound words, either put into method by premeditation by our ſelves, if we have ability; or extemporary. But we muſt be ſure that we ever pray firſt with underſtanding of our wants, weakneſs and unworthineſs, and of the words we utter. 2ly, With reverence and fear, dreading Gods, greatneſs, ſanctify-

ctifying his name, and asking things according to his will in the name of Chriſt. 3ly. With faith, believing his ability, willingneſs, and faithfulneſs to anſwer us for the ſake of his Son. 4ly. With Love, having our hearts open to forgive, and our hands to give to our brethren in need. 5ly. With earneſtneſs and importunity following him with ſupplications till we ſpeed, and endeavouring to bring our hearts into a conſtant praying frame.

Meditation.

Will the Lord hear the prayers of his people? O how much am I bound to adore him that gives this priviledge to me! Can there be a greater favour than that ſuch a wanting needy creature ſhould be ſo often called upon, and urged to ask for things ſo good and ſo great, freely at his hands that hath them to beſtow? He bids me ask largely, to ſhew his infinite goodneſs and ſufficiency. He bids me ask in faith, and

without doubting, to shew the reality of his purpose to answer me; He bids me ask with importunity and perseverance, to evidence his unchangeableness, that though he may Delay yet he will not Deny me. He declares his ability and sufficiency to encourage me, his goodness and love, to provoke me, and his engagements and promises to embolden and uphold me in my prayers, And assures me of great and inconceivable happiness, intended, prepared, and purchased for the children of men, that I may lift up holy hands to him without wrath or doubting, And though I am unworthy of the least of his mercies, yet when he shews me the riches of his grace in the promises, and bids me ask, and will be offended with me if I ask not; How can I chuse but say, Be it unto me, O Lord, according to thy word, and remember thy word to thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope; yea pray that he would deal bountifully

with

with me whose necessities are so urgent. And I am the more encouraged seeing the Lord is pleased to record several grants of wonderful favours and deliverances given to his people praying, though they were men of like passions and infirmities, and hath also made it my duty, dayly, And my Saviour requires me to ask in his name, and I shall receive. O what amazing love is this, that God should discover the goodness of his nature, the riches of his grace, and the tenderness of his bowels to one so vile and worthless, and bid me come with boldness to the throne of grace, that I may obtain mercy, and find seasonable relief! *Heb.* 4. 16. χαριν εἰς εὐκαιρον βοηθειαν, I cannot out of reverence and obedience to him, or respect to my self, doe less than lye as a beggar at his door, praying always, especially considering that there are not onely some set times of audience, and places for worship, when I can get a competent number

to joyn with me in prayer, but though I enter into my closet, and pray to him in secret he will reward me openly, yea doth often mind and answer ejaculations, and knows the meanings of our groanings. But I must be sure to make my prayers with a holy disposition of soul, to improve to Gods honour what I shall receive by his bounty, and to ask nothing but with submission, but what he hath promised absolutely, and these I will onely ask in the name of his Son, O God, bless me with the Spirit of grace and supplication, that I ever intending thine honour, may be assisted to glorifie thee here on earth, and may be glorified with thee hereafter.

SECT.

SECT. III.

Of the Lords day.

GOD who is Lord of all, having measured out time by day and night, and in the space of six days finished the Creation, was pleased to reserve the seventh part of time to his own worship, whereupon we read that he rested the seventh day, and blessed and sanctified it, *Gen.2.2,3.* as a day of rest to man, from the common works of his calling to commemorate the goodness of Almighty God in the Creation, and ordering of all things, and giving to mankind the use or dominion over all. And though the practice of the Church, concerning the observation of this day, is not recorded till the time of Gods raining Manna upon *Israel* in the wilderness, yet who can doubt of its observation long before, considering its early institution? This wor-

worship was at first fixed to the seventh day of the week, and so delivered to *Israel* in the Decalogue to be observed, and appointed as a sign betwixt God and them, *Exod.* 31. 17. which continued obligatory till the time of the worlds actual redemption, by the death & resurrection of Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world. But after his resurrection, this service was removed to the first day of the week, which was the day of his resurrection, and is the Christian Sabbath, or the Lords day, wherein we are not to forget the wisdom, power, and goodness of God in our Creation, and giving us the service of all the creatures, so are we more especially, to adore his grace in our redemption from the curse and wrath deserved, by the gift of his Son, who on this day rose again to manifest the full satisfaction he had made for us. And as the consecration and offering of the first born, and first-fruits in *Israel*, and the sanctifying the first

days of their moneths and years, brought a blessing on all the rest of their increase and dayes, So the sanctifying of this day is the way to obtain blessings on all our enjoyments.

To the sanctifying the Lords day there is necessary; first, Preparation. 2ly. A due deportment in it.

First, Preparation. God is the holy one and will be sanctified in all that come nigh him, It is therefore necessary that our hearts that are apt to trifle, or gather pollution be prepared. Preparation consists, First, in laying aside our worldly business which is lawfull on other dayes. God doth allow us six dayes to attend on our callings, but hath sanctified this to attend on him, and we ought so to compass and compleat our worldly affairs herein, that no ends or remains thereof may abide to discompose or disturb us, and so to refresh our bodies by rest and sleep, that we come not to fetch out our naps when we should be exercised in divine service.

Secondly, In exciting and stirring up our graces. Our God is not pleased with idleness, but requires our hearts and whole man to attend on him in spiritual services, and every grace is a powerfull principle to promote action for God; We should therefore excite our graces to enable us to the casting out of every sin, which rendreth us unserviceable; and ransack our hearts, and review our actions, where we may find real cause of humiliation, and many errata's that require a speedy amendment and repentance: for how can we think of drawing nigh to God without holiness? We must therefore stirre up our faith, fear, love, humility, and all other graces that we may serve God acceptably, and be sure not to neglect to exercise our charity, knowing that if we bring our gift to the altar, and remember that any brother hath ought against us, we must goe and first be reconciled to him and do him right, before

God

God will accept us, *Matth.* 5.23,24. yea we must pray for pardon and forgiveness of our sins, with hearts forgiving the trespasses done by others against us; Or we have no hopes of audience; *Matth.* 6.14,15. We cannot serve God acceptably in the various duties of his worship without the exercise of all grace.

II. The Lords day is sanctified by a due deportment in it. When the day is come, it is necessary not onely to put on clean and modest apparel, knowing that God did ever require cleanliness and decency in his worship, but to have our souls attired with grace; as first with Humility. Nothing is more hatefull to God nor destructive to our selves than pride; God pitcheth battel against them, *Jam.* 4.6. *ἀντιτάσσεται*; and every one of them is an abomination to him, *Prov.* 16.5. but he gives grace to the humble, and is it not this you seek for? He teacheth, Ps. 25.9. hears, Ps. 9.12.

and dwelleth with the humble, *Isa.* 57.15. Humility shews us our selves to self-loathing, It shews us God to reverence and fear him, and our Saviour to value and embrace him; This makes us to see our selves as creatures alwayes depending on God, as sinfull Creatures, alwayes at his mercy, and as redeemed creatures, that are not our own. If we rightly understand what sinners we have ever been, and how vile we are, and provoking in every thing we cannot but see cause to be humbled; specially when we draw nigh to God

Meditation.

Humility is a handmaid to every grace, and makes it more illustrious. It makes faith more vigorous, Love more fervent, and obedience more exact. This would make me hear more heedfully, pray more earnestly, and keep the Lords day more holily. I cannot serve God, love my neighbour, nor mind my self as I ought, without it. Were I humble,

how

how penitent should I be for my faults! how reverent in my devotion! and how pliable to commands. This would enable me when I look on the works of God to adore him, when I receive service from his creatures to praise and magnifie him, and when I hear of my redeemer to devote my self to him. Humility would purge out my frowardness and make me patient, it would remove my ingratitude and make me thankful. It would cure my spiritual pride that I should not dispute divine truths, but believe them. I have many faults that make me unfit to attend on God, but my greatest fault is that I am not humbled for them; I have much weakness, but it is most discovered in that I lean not on him that is Allsufficient; I have many wants, but my greatest want is humility, for God dwells with such, and gives them his Grace; O God let me be cloathed with humility, and wear it as a badge every day, but

keep me ever in the exercise thereof in all the duties of thy worship on thine own day.

2. We must exercise faith on the Lords day. The God we are to serve is not to be seen with bodily eyes, nor embraced by bodily hands, but is onely seen by faith and embraced by love; And the things we are chiefly to trade and deal for this day are spiritual and invisible, as pardon of sin, peace with God, grace and glory, and faith onely discovers these to us. Without faith it is impossible to perform the service of the Lords day aright. Faith must be exercised in all our services. We must act it in our hearing, by believing, God; in our praying, by trusting in him; in Sacraments, to see him and relye on him, to conferre on us, and confirm to us the blessings of the Covenant of Grace. It is not enough to have Christ in our books, if he be not in our bosomes, not enough to have him in our mouths if we want

him

him in our hearts. Our union is made, and communion with Christ confirmed only by faith, he is the head and we the members, but it is faith unites us. He is the foundation and we the building, but faith is the cement; He is the root and we the branches, but faith is that whereby the sap is conveyed to nourish us. This union is a certainty, but onely seen and known by faith, so that this grace must be exercised on this day.

Meditation.

In what spiritual and mysterious work am I engaged on the Lords day, who can only by faith see my master and my wages; and, without it can perform no piece of service aright? Lord strengthen the eye and hand of my faith, that I may serve thee acceptably. My dear Saviour Jesus Christ, who is declared to be the Son of God with power by his resurrection from the dead on the first day of the week, gives me the priviledge of the service of this day. My state by sin was equal with

with the offending Jew, who though he was sensible of his sin and turned from it, had no peace nor hope, till he brought a sacrifice without blemish, confessed his guilt and laid it thereon, saw it slain and cast into that fire that came down from heaven that was never to go out, and then was pardon pronounced. My sin also bound me over to wrath, but the Lord Jesus bare my sins and endured the wrath of God, and by his stripes I am healed, and he hath made peace by the blood of his Cross, *Col.* 1. 20. and is risen again to evidence the full payment and satisfaction he hath made. And how can I forbear to cry out, My Lord and my God, and to say, *This is the day which the Lord hath made, I will rejoyce and be glad therein*, and will doe all in his name, who hath made my peace, and brought me into acceptance.

3. We should be filled with love to God. This is the day we are to meet

meet with him, and receive his blessing, To hear his voice, To put up our requests and to come to his table, and be fed with the fatness of his house, and made to drink of the river of his pleasures. It is a day to turn over the volumnes of his love and bounty in the works of Creation and redemption; and is it fit to meet the God of love without hearts raised and ravished with love to him? This is a day of Communion betwixt God and his people; If they make their complaints and confessions to him, he manifests his compassions to them. If they reveale their wants by petition, he reveals his goodness by promises; and while we stand trembling by reason of our faults and guilt, he discovers his son to us, whose love passeth knowledge, and hath unsearchable riches of grace to conferr; Now how sweet should our meditation of him be? and how can we chuse but be ever longing and labouring for those things that may render us

us more serviceable and thankfull to him, who hath manifested so much power in our Creation, liberality in our provision, and such abundant grace and love in providing a ransom for us, even his own onely begotten Son, who by his blood and death wrought and accomplished our salvation.

Meditation.

The Lords day is surely the time of love betwixt God and man, and I am perswaded I am called off from my worldly business this day, that I might busie my self in contemplation of his infinite grace and love. Doth not God deal with me as his darling, who hath spread that glorious spangled canopy of the heavens over me, which sends down sweet refreshing influences upon me, and all the Creatures, & made all the earthy creatures with their various gifts and abilities to serve me with their life and death? My Maker hath placed me as a king in the army of his creatures

tures, and though I am inferiour to many of the children of men, yet the heavens send down their influences, The beasts pay their tribute of fear and service, and the Planets refresh me as readily as the greatest Prince: Can I behold all this without love to my Creator? But this day presents me with greater favours than these. I was maimed by the fall of my first parents, and undone by their breaking with God, and by mine own folly have doubled my offence and danger, But God reveales to me this day a secret of infinite love, that his own onely begotten Son hath undertaken my recovery, Though I sinned he suffered, and by his stripes I am healed, and when I was an enemy and without strength, he dyed for me, and this day he minds me of it, and appoints me to commemorate this his love: I was a bankrupt but he sends his Spirit with a sufficient stock to set me up, and make me serviceable; I forfeited all Priviledges here

on

on earth, but he hath prepared a Crown, a Kingdom, and inheritance in heaven which are reserved for me: And though I am a cursed Creature by nature and guilt, yet he assures me that I shall never perish, but have everlasting life, if I assent and consent to Christ. Never were greater discoveries made of the Divine Love than on this day. How can I contain my self? Or how shall I express my self? O that I may be warmed with the heat of this Divine love, that I may not onely be enabled to thanks and vows, but be melted into a humble compliance with his will, to be ever obedient, for I must render my self utterly unworthy of the priviledges of the Lords day, if I should not be ravished with his love.

4. We should keep the Lords day with praise and thanksgiving. The variety of Gods favours, & the infiniteness of his love should fill our hearts with thankfulness, and our mouths

with praiſes. We did not merit his favour, it is the more meet to mention it; We can never requite it, but it were baſeneſs not to recite it. Alas we are unworthy to hear of Gods love, much more to partake of it, which is without bounds or bottom. His works are wonderfull and glorious, but his love in our redemption, myſterious and paſſing knowledge, and his grace herein ſo tranſcendent, that how can we be ſilent? They that dwell in Gods houſe will ſtill be praiſing him, Their ſongs will never end. The ſervices on Mount Sion were all celebrated with ſinging, And ſhall all the additions made by the diſcovery and gift of Chriſt make us dumb? We read that the voice of joy is in the tabernacles of the righteous; and ſhall it not be heard much more in Gods tabernacles? Surely he dwells in praiſes, not onely in his upper houſe in heaven, but in his lower houſe on earth, and if we know and love him, we cannot in this his

day

day but offer to the Lord the sacrifice of thanksgiving.

2ly. Having brought our hearts thus in frame, it is meet to attend the service of our God in joyning with his Church in publick worship. This day is appointed for an open and visible acknowledgement of God, and profession of his name, whose goodness and bounty is largely discovered in his works of Creation and providence, but most eminently in our redemption by Jesus Christ, who rose again from the dead the first day of the week, And herein we are obliged to exercise our selves in hearing the sacred Scriptures read and preached; praying to God, praising him, celebrating Sacraments; And as opportunity is afforded to exercise charity in giving and forgiving, visiting the sick, comforting the afflicted, and openly appearing in such acts of piety as may evidence our sincerity in the Christian profession; And in the interspaces of Publick worship,

it

it is proper to imploy our ſelves in reading, praying, catechiſing, and encouraging and ſtrengthening one another in our Chriſtian profeſſion; And further to promote Piety by meditation, ſecret prayer or praiſe and devoting our ſelves to the Lord.

Meditation.

O how wonderful is the Love of God to us, He ſends to us every day and would hear from us often in the day, but he will have us one day in every week to come to his houſe, and be with him all the day to behold his love, and hold communion with him, And can any be more concerned than I am, to lay hold on this priviledge, who am ſo ignorant & deficient? I am a poor ſtarveling under all the means of Grace, but ſurely, the eye of my faith would fail, my ſpiritual heat decay, and my graces dwindle away and languiſh, if I had not this weekly day of refreſhment, from Gods preſence in his ordinances. Alas, I ſhould looſe my ſelf in the world, if

I were not called off, and called home to attend on God, renew my strength and mine acquaintance with him, whose love is onely able to revive and ravish my soul, surely a day in his house is better than a thousand, and to behold his face, and enquire in his Temple the onely thing desireable. Can there be greater happiness than to be with God, in whose favour is life, and whose loving kindness is better than life? Surely, There are no comforts more reall than those that faith presents, no enjoyments more sweet than those that love provides, nor any treasure comparable to the enjoyment of the Lord. I am in this day, not onely called to see God in the volumnes of his works, but to enjoy him in the manifestations of his love. The seventh day at first deserved to be kept holy day, which gave a full discovery of a confused Chaos brought into comely order, and such variety of creatures, made all very good and serviceable

it

to us, ſo that with the greateſt equity it was ſanctifyed that we ſhould honour and glorifie our great Creator in it; But we by our ſin marred our ſtate, and forfeited all our priviledges; now on the firſt day of the week our Lord aroſe from the dead as a compleat redeemer, having fully ſatisfyed juſtice for us, & anew ſtated us in the favor of God, & the enjoyment of the ſervice of the Creation, which muſt needs inhance our praiſe, and winde up our ſouls to a higher ſtraine of thankfulneſs. Alas how dreadfull and diſmal was our ſtate to be placed in the midſt of Gods Creatures, which might every one have been our executioners, while we were proſecuted by an accuſing Conſcience and an offended God; But this day preſents me with certain evidences of reconciliation, ſo that we are brought into a new ſtate, and have, as it were new heavens and a new earth, that we may not onely pray Hoſanna, but ſing Halelujah. Fill my heart O God,

with

with the apprehenſions of thine infinite love, that I may ſo remember to keep holy this day here, that I may keep an everlaſting Sabbath with thee in glory.

SECT. IV.

Of the Sacraments.

THe Sacraments are Divine inſtitutions, in the right celebration whereof, we worſhip God. Theſe are indeed myſterious ſervices, wherein one thing is viſible to the bodily eye, and another inviſible in the eye of our mind, which is apprehended by faith. Theſe are two, Baptiſm and the Lords Supper. The one for our admiſſion into the Church; the other, for our confirmation. The one for our new birth, the other for our nouriſhment. The firſt to be once uſed onely, The other to be

iterated often. But both to be used as divine appointments and seales of the Covenant of Grace, appointed by Christ to clear our knowledge of Divine things by things sensible; Christ being the author of both, instituted them to represent the benefits that come by him. Now our receiving these Sacraments according to the institution makes us visible Christians, but the receiving of these with spiritual grace, and dispositions requisite, makes us the real members of Christs mystical body.

First Baptism. This is a Sacrament administred by a fit person washing the receiver with water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. By this we are admitted into the Church of Christ, It being affixed to, or a consequent of a solemn renunciation of sin, and an engagement to believe and obey the Gospel. So that it is a sign of our being the Lords, a seal of our repentance, and devotion to the service of the Father,

Son and Holy Ghost, And it is a Seal on Gods part of our admission into his family, of our new birth, grafting into Christ, and interest in the blessings of the Covenant of Grace.

Meditation.

May the day of my Baptism be cal'd the day of my new birth? O how great is my priviledge hereby! I was by nature a child of wrath, but through Grace I am admitted into the Church of God, O that I may with the greatest regard be ever mindfull of the Covenant, and of that solemn renunciation I have made of all sinfull wayes, and the engagement I have taken upon me, that in heart and life, in word and works, I may evidence my self to be regenerate. Was I not, when baptized into Christ, Baptized into his death, and buried with him by Baptism into death? *Rom.* 6. 3, 4. And can I with the swine turn again to wallow in the mire? Did I not by Baptism put on Christ, *Gal.* 3. 27. and shall I put him off,

and

and forsake him? God forbid, Should I break this bond which is my greatest honour and ornament, I might well conclude my self to be possest by Satan; I was not Baptized in a puddle, but in clean water, and must keep clean hands and a clean heart, All the blessings of the Covenant of Grace were stated on me in my Baptism, but I cannot enjoy them, but in the exercise of my sincerity in the performance of my duty. Lord, Grant that I may live as a Baptized person, exercising the grace and enjoying the comforts of thy children.

Secondly, The other Sacrament is, The Lords Supper, In which God by the signs of Bread and Wine broken, poured out and given according to the institution, doth signifie and seal a communication of all the benefits of Christs death and resurrection to the soul of a worthy Communicant. In this Sacrament, the same Covenant entred in Baptism is ratifyed and renewed.

newed. The signs here are doubled for the more full confirmation of the benefits. Now to the worthy celebration hereof, we may consider what preparation is necessary, and what grace in the time of celebration.

First, Somwhat is necessary before we celebrate the holy Communion. It is a mystery, and Divine Mysteries ought reverently to be heeded. It is sealing a Covenant, and we ought to be prepared. Now to help herein, we may consider, the direction the Jew received from God for his preparation for the Passeover, in whose place this Sacrament doth succeed, and it will direct us.

1. He that kept the passeover in *Israel*, was to be a clean person. To the Jews there was a twofold uncleanness, Morall and Ceremonial. Moral cleanness consisted in being purged from all corrupt principles and Doctrines, so as to lay hold on Gods Covenant, and seal the same by Circumcision, for no uncircumcised

cised person might eat thereof, *Exod.* 12. 48. Neither ought any person to approach the Lords table till he have renounced all sinfull and idolatrous principles, and entered a solemn profession of faith and obedience to Christ, and sealed it by his Baptism. Now, because we are commonly Baptized in our infancy (wherein by reason of our nonage we are not so capable of the weight and worth of this ordinance) it is necessary that being come to age, we make a personal assent, and consent to the Covenant before sealed, and take it upon our selves solemnly to observe and do, what we are thereby obliged unto, and to order our lives accordingly, before we come to this Sacrament, which is for the confirmation of the precedent Covenant.

2. Ceremonial uncleanness rendred the Jew uncapable of keeping the Passover, so that he was to stay a moneth longer, even till he was cleansed, *Numb.* 9. 10, 11. And

doth not this hint to us that if by any temptation we have polluted our selvs we must be clensed by repentance before we can be worthy communicants?

II. The Jew was commanded to cast out all leaven out of his house before this feast, *Exod.* 12. 15. Now though the Christian is assured that no meats defile him, yet the moral of this may remain; for as Leaven hath a threefold quality, First, to heave, swell, puff up and raise what it is put into; or secondly, to sour and corrupt, and thirdly, to diffuse and spread it self into the whole and every part; so the Metaphor is in the Holy Scriptures applyed to false Doctrine, *Matth.* 16. 6. 12. which not onely swels men with pride, but eates and observes the same method as a gangreen, 2 *Tim.* 2. 17. γάγγραινα νομὴν ἕξει, proceeding till it corrupts all, 2ly. It is applyed to sin, 1 *Cor.* 5. 8. we read of the leaven of malice and wickedness, or thirdly, To prophane men, 1 *Cor.* 5. 6, 7.

6.7. their sins are infectious and spreading, now it is necessary that we search for, and cast out all these sorts of leaven, for it is required, that a man examine or approve himself, such a one as is meet, before he eat of that bread and drink of that cup, 1 *Cor.* 11.26. δοκιμαζέτω.

III. The Jew was to take up his paschal spotless lamb, four days before the Passeover, *Exod.*12.3,6. to fill his heart with sutable thoughts to the service approaching. And how could he but be sensible that he deserved death, and to lye before the scorching fire of Divine wrath, which to prevent, this innocent Lamb without blemish was to be sacrificed, yea how could he be insensible of the divine Grace and Love, that would accept a ransom for him, of which this Lamb was the type. And are not we taught by all this to have Christ that Lamb of God, and our Passeover before our eyes, that we might fill our selves with debasing

thoughts of our ſelves and of our danger, conſidering what our ſins deſerve, and be filled with admiration at the infiniteneſs of Divine Love, that provided ſuch a ſacrifice for us without blemiſh, who by his death & bloodſhed makes our peace? Shall we not look upon him till our ſouls are affected and transformed into his likeneſs, and provoked to the greateſt care and readineſs to prepare our ſelves to attend on him? And here we may ſtay and thus conſider.

Medit. *Is Allmighty God ſo gracious & kind to me that he wil have me come to his houſe, renew the Covenant betwixt him & me, & come to his Table? Surely nothing ſhould hinder me from cloſing with him. He is ever mindfull of his Covenant, and his thoughts to me ward are more than can be numbred, and I ſhould double my guilt if I ſhould neglect his gracious call. But doth he call me? Alas, I am ſo dirty, ſo unworthy and ſo guilty, that mine own heart reads me a hard de-*

ſtiny;

ſtiny; and little did I think I ſhould be intended in the great preparations he hath made for his redeemed ones. That I may not wrong my ſelf, nor diſhonour him, he calls me to prepare my ſelf, that I may find welcome entertainment, and drink of the water of life freely. O what unwearied, unſearchable, ſoul-raviſhing Love is the love of God! But is indeed the meſſage ſent and the invitation intended to me, that I ſhould renew the Covenant with him? O never had any hunger-ſtarved prodigal more need, nor more unworthineſs. Will he yet again, after ſo many abuſes, grant me the favour to ſee his Love embleamed forth ſo lively in this Sacrament, and urge me to receive him? Surely I muſt not, I dare not, I will not deny him, but with hand and heart cloſe with him, and how may my heart revive to think that I may ſee the face, and feel the beams of the Sun of righteouſneſs darting on my ſoul. I will return to my firſt husband, and prepare

my ſelf for his embraces. But *O* how *unfit am I to approach his preſence! My hands are defiled with ſin, and my fingers with iniquity, My tongue is an unruly member, a world of iniquity, and my heart unclean and deceitfull. While I endeavour to cleanſe my heart, waſh me O God, and I ſhall be whiter than ſnow, and create in me a clean heart. While I am purpoſing and promiſing that my lips ſhall not tranſgreſs; ſet thou, O God, a watch before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips. Incline not my heart to any wicked thing, for I lift up my heart to thee. I am aſhamed of ſin, I would not renew it, O Lord, ſave me from my ſins. Sin offends thee and me, Aſſiſt me, O Lord, againſt it, which is both thine enemy and mine. I would be the Lords now and ever, but oh my weakneſs and unworthineſs! Though ſin will be preſent with me, it ſhall not be welcomed by me; though it will intrude, it ſhall not be entertained, I will caſt out all leaven that*

I may

I may be a new lump, for Christ my Passeover is sacrificed, 1 Cor. 5. 7. *and he eats and hasteneth me to receive him. In his favour I shall have peace, by his suffering, deliverance, and through his merits, comfort. He is my exceeding joy,* Psal. 43. 4. *my exceeding great reward,* Gen. 15. 1. *my crown of Glory,* Isa. 28. 5. *How empty and insufficient are all things without him, and how unhappy am I while severed from him? He is the Prince of Peace, the God of Love, the bread of Life, the wine of consolation, in his presence is fulness of joy, O God prepare me to entertain and receive him.*

2ly. It is necessary that this Sacrament be celebrated by us in a holy manner, and here we may observe further, the direction and demeanour of the Jew in his Passeover, as

First. The Jew was to keep his Passeover with understanding, for the fathers were enjoyned in the day

of celebration, to declare the meaning of that ſervice, *Exod.* 12.26,27. And are not we concerned to underſtand the meaning of this ſervice. The bread here, which is the natural ſtaff of Life, repreſents Chriſt, who is the Life of the world, And the wine repreſents him alſo, who is the moſt full and real cordial to the Soul fainting under its own guilt; This bread is broken, and wine poured out, to ſignifie the death and ſuffering of the Lord Jeſus, and the ſhedding of his blood to attone & reconcile us. Theſe elements are given and received as the ſigns and ſeals of the Covenant ratifyed betwixt Chriſt and the receivers. So that we are to underſtand hereby that we were in a curſed ſtate, ready to famiſh and faint under our guilt. But God was pleaſed to lay on Chriſt our iniquities, under which he was ſlain, but is riſen again to comfort our ſouls, and to be to them ſtrength and reviving, as bread and wine adminiſter ſtrength to our natural

tural bodies, And this neceſſary, in that he eates and drinks damnation to himſelf that diſcerns not the Lords body herein, 1 *Cor.* 11.29.

Meditation.

The day is come that I am called to draw nigh to the Lords table, and hereby the elements of bread and wine Chriſt is repreſented and tendred to to me, How neceſſary is it that I ſhould underſtand his grace herein! I am concerned to be ſenſible, how dreadfull my ſtate is that Chriſt the Son of God could not relieve me till he had dyed and ſhed his blood for me, and that I cannot receive nouriſhment and ſtrength from him, till I ſee him broken and crucifyed. O what doe I owe to him that hath ſo loved me! But this bread and wine repreſenting Chriſt, is tendred to me to eate and drink wherein I am minded of the unſpeakable love of my Saviour, that hereby is made a conveyance of the greateſt gift that ever Creature did enjoy, Chriſt with all his benefits being tendred

dred to me, and the most close and firm union made betwixt Christ and me, if I receive him aright, for I may say, My well beloved is mine and I am his. O God give me understanding that I may discern the Lords body.

Secondly, The Jew was to exercise his faith in this Sacrament, for in *Egypt* he was to make use of the blood of his Sacrifice by striking it on the lintel and two side-posts of his door to secure him from the destroying Angel, and then to eat of it after it was rost; *Exod.* 12. 7,8. to evidence, not onely his obedience to the Divine command, but also his faith in God, whose servant he professed himself, and his faith in the promise of salvation. And less cannot be expected from us than faith in him, by whose blood we have reconciliation, *Col.* 1. 20. But we must also by faith feed upon him, for we are required personally and particularly to take and eat, and take and drink; so that as

the

the Jew could not expect security, if the door post where he was, were not besprinkled with blood, and he himself eat of the Paschal Lamb, no more can we expect to escape eternal wrath without a personal faith in Christ, so that you may say,

Meditation.

In this service there is such a particular treatment with every individual person, that I see I must have a particular faith in Christ, for I must take and eat, and take and drink. So that if I want faith or sincerity I shall render my self an unworthy Communicant; None can need Christ more than my self, but, alas, vile sinner, how can I think to receive such love and favour? Whence is it that I, who am a thousand times more vile than the earth I tread on, and unworthy of the least mercy, should dare to lay hold on the greatest gift that ever God had to bestow? But he will have it so, and I must neither disobey him by refusing to attend on him, nor dishonour

him

him, by refusing to receive him tendering himself; for I must take, not only bread and wine, but Christ by the hand of faith, I will therefore in obedience to the Divine command, and in sense of the Divine Love receive my Saviour, and readily, heartily, and wholly present, resign and devote my self to him; for doth not he by bidding me take and eat, as much as say, I am thy Saviour, believe in me; and by receiving doe not I say, My Lord and my God, I trust in thee, strengthen O Lord the hand of my faith, that I may receive thee, and be nourished to everlasting life.

Thirdly. The Jew was to eat his Passeover with bitter herbs, *Exod.* 12. 8. whereby he was minded of the bitterness and severity of his bondage in *Egypt*, And are not we concerned to be sensible of the dismal cursed state we are in by guilt, lying under the lash of the Law? We were without hope or help, till Christ

by

by his blood and death reconciled us; And in our approach to the Lords table we have those *horrenda mysteria*, the dreadful mysteries of our Saviours crucifying before our eyes. Now who can see the blessed body of his Saviour so torn and mangled, or understand his soul to be in such agonies and desertions, and his blood shed, and himself slain to compleat our redemption, and not dissolve into tears, and abhorre himself for his own guilt? Surely it is very meet that we offer up the Sacrifice of a broken heart, when God entertains us with the Sacrifice of a broken crucified Saviour.

Meditation.

Is it necessary that I should be entertained with the representation and remembrance of my Saviours sufferings, as often as I have the discovery made of my redemption by him? How can my heart chuse but melt and break in the sense of mine own vileness? Had I seen him on the Cross, made a pub-

publick ſcorn, enduring the torments, and uttering thoſe dreadfull words, My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me, and been told that he ſuffered all this for my ſake, could I have born it, or have forborn dying with him? But I underſtand now, that it is really ſo, and can I look upon him or my ſelf without ſelf abhorrency, who had made my ſelf ſervile that it muſt coſt my Saviours blood and death to redeem me? O that mine own ſins and my Saviours ſufferings may beget in me an everlaſting hatred of every ſin, and make me irreconcileable to it! Surely I am concerned to be ever remembring what a vile poor thing I am, and how dearly bought, that I may account my ſelf not mine own, and while I abhorre and loath my ſelf, I muſt and will love him, and endeavour to glorifie him in my ſoul and body which are his, and never forget that I am the deareſt purchaſe that ever was made, to glorifie my redeemer, and look on a ſinfull ſtate as the moſt intollerable.

Fourth-

Fourthly, The Jew kept his passe-over with love, for the whole family were to eat it together as one fraternity, forgetting (as it were) there distances, and all enmities, and they were called Σύναξις, a brotherhood, or Society knit together in love. And are not we who eat of the same bread and drink of the same cup required to be one bread and one body and to live as members one of another.

Meditation.

Christ by these pledges doth not only oblige me to himself, but brings me into the Communion of Saints, and fellowship with his members, so that I am concerned to be sensible of the ayls of some, and the comforts of others, to weep with the one, and rejoyce with the other, and sympathize with all, serving them in love, as being mine own and my Saviours members, and love them as my self: I have nothing but what I have received, and I received nothing to napkin up, but

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to improve and impart, and muſt be ready to part with it when the Lord, in any of his members, hath need of it. Some need the help of my eſtate, I will communicate to them, as knowing that I have received that I may impart: ſome need my pity, I will for Chriſts ſake forgive them: I muſt labour to ſupport the weak, and put them in joynt again that are disjoynted and fallen, knowing mine own frailty. We are one bread and one body, and all made to drink into one ſpirit. How can I ſay I love my Saviour if I love not his members, when the leaſt of them may be better than my ſelf, and the meaneſt is ſuch as the world is not worthy of? I underſtand I honour and ſerve my Saviour, when for his ſake I communicate to theſe. Surely, though I wou'd do good to all, yet my goodneſs ſhall principally extend to the Saints and the excellent in the earth, in whom is all my delight, Pſal. 16 3. *and I will be a companion of all that love my Lord, and keep his Precepts*, Pſal.

119. 63. *for how can I say I love my Lord whom I have not seen, if I neglect his members and friends, whom I have seen, and engaged my self to them by communicating with them?*

Fifthly. The Jew kept his Passeover with joy and praise. He had his Hallel or Song of praise and thanksgiving, and his cup of blessing, and our Saviour accordingly had after this Supper an hymne, *Matth.* 26. 30. And how can we do less than let out our souls into the greatest joy and thankfulness for his unspeakable love manifested in the Covenant of Grace to us? This Sacrament, it was in the Primitive times called, the *Eucharist*, from the songs of praise then uttered.

Meditation.

Had ever any soul more cause of thanksgiving than I? who am not only admitted to be a guest to the Lord of heaven and earth, but to receive the greatest pledges of favour that ever crea-

creature had, even to be brought into union and communion with the Son of God, that he ſhould be mine, and I his? That bread of life that came down from heaven that was never leavened with any thing to corrupt it, is prepared for me, and preſented to me, and that water which is as a ſpring of water ſpringing up to eternal life is given me; Lord, why is all this for me, when ſo many of greater parts and place have no ſuch offers? This is love that paſſeth underſtanding; that I, that am curſed and condemned in my ſelf, and in the Law, ſhould be not onely delivered, but preferred and taken into the moſt loving embraces, and be fed with the fatneſs of Gods houſe, and made to drink of the rivers of his pleaſures. O! bleſs the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me bleſs his holy name; Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all thine iniquities, who heals all thy diſeaſes, Who redeemed thy life from de-

deſtruction, who crowns thee with loving kindneſs, and tender mercies, who ſatisfies thy mouth with good things, ſo that thy youth is renewed as the Eagles, *Pſal.* 103. 1. *ad* 6. I might have thought, at my going to Gods houſe, I might have been bound to the Altar as a Sacrifice, and my blood been there poured out to ſatisfie juſtice. But I find a Sacrifice prepared and offered for me, and a table furniſht with the bread of life, and God tendring me the cup of conſolation, and renewing his Covenant with me, O that I may ever live in the ſenſe of his love, ſinging his praiſe while I have my being. Awake, my glory, and be not ſilent, for I will not onely make mention of his love, but preſent my ſelf as a living Sacrifice, holy and acceptable to him, which is a reaſonable ſervice, or the ſervice according to his word, *Rom.* 12. 1. λογικὴν λατρειαν and yield up my ſelf unto God, as one alive from the dead, and my members as the in-ſtru-

instruments of righteousnes, *Rom.* 6. 13.

A Meditation after the Communion.

WAs ever such amazing and transcending love manifested to any creature, that a vile and cursed sinner should be so lovingly received and entertained at the Lords table? Christ the Son of the blessed, who is God equall with the Father, is pleased to see and visit miserable banckrupts, who had spent all, and undone themselves in rebellion; and becomes a pawn to justice for us, dyes to redeem us, and rising again becomes food to nourish us to eternal life: All which I have seen represented, and have been made a partaker of this day in the Sacrament. And how can I chuse but be transported? Have I not (as it were) heard him say to me, Come see, was ever love like mine? I have born your guilt, fulfill'd the Law, dyed an ignominious

minious curſed death for you; and now tender my ſelf to you as the bread of life to ſuſtain you; Behold my hands and head, my feet, and back, and ſide, and ſee what your ſins made me ſuffer. Have not all my wounds ſo many mouths to ſpeak the love I bear to you? Goe with me to the Garden, and ſee my Agony and trouble, and how I am betrayed, Goe with me to the judgement-hall, and ſee how my head is wounded with thorns, blows and buffets, and all my body in a gore with whips, and how I am made a ſcorn; Go with me to *Golgotha* & ſee how I am crucified, abuſed and tormented to death, Follow me to my ſepulchre and ſee me there dead and buryed, and know that all this befell me for love of thee, and to ſave thee from perishing. O the unſearchable depth of Divine Love! Never was ſo dear a purchaſe made as my redemption; Surely it is meet he ſhould have what he bought ſo dear, and that I ſhould

heartily and readily give him posses-
sion of his own. I will therefore pre-
sent my self to him, entreating him
to furnish every room to his own
content and liking, and command
every power of my soul and every
member of my body into obedience
to himself, and tell him, that though
formerly my soul, hath been let out
and parcell'd to diverse lusts, and as a
common Inne hat entertained all
comers, yet now it is reduced into
one entire habitation for himself a-
lone, and will bid him welcome a
thousand times and charge my soul
to pay all homage respect and ser-
vice to him. O my soul, shall any
thing be endured or liked by thee
that attends him who so concerns
himself in my salvation? I see, sin
would have my Saviours blood and
life, before it could be forgiven and
subdued, and I will not onely bid defi-
ance to it in all its kinds, but be dayly
crucifying, and mortifying it. And
seeing my hopes of deliverance are

laid

laid in the blood of my Saviour, his rule in me shall be maintained by the death and conquest of my sins; for with what face, O Lord, can I say, I love thee, if I should hugg or harbour sin that is such a deadly enemy to thee and me?

Another.

I have been this day entertained at the Lords table, and there been minded of the love and sufferings of my Saviour, not that he would upbraid me, to condemn me but oblige me to adore and honour him. He doth (as it were) say to me, Behold, by these pledges of bread and wine, I give and convey my self to you, and all the purchase of my blood if you will receive me. And I have sealed the Covenant and accepted of his Love by my eating and drinking; and shall I break with him that loves me more than I can love my self? I cannot but abhorre the thought of such ingratitude and perfidiousness. Surely the high praises of God shall be in my mouth,

and the two edged ſword of his word in my hand to ſlay and oppoſe thoſe luſts and enemies that ſhall withſtand his rule in me, and I will pray and endeavor for that armor & thoſe ſpiritual weapons, that are mighty through God to the pulling down of ſtrong holds, caſting down reaſonings, and every high thing that exalts it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God; and brings every thought in captivity to the obedience of Chriſt, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. I am from the day that I entred the profeſſion of Chriſtianity engaged to renounce all ſin, and to keep Gods Commandements, and walk in them all my days; and as I have vowed and ſworn, I will perform it, to keep Gods righteous judgements, Pſal. 119. 106. But, alas, without thy grace, O Bleſſed Lord, and the aſſiſtance of thy Holy Spirit I can do nothing becoming a perſon ſo engaged. Never was creature more obliged, nor more weak and unworthy, Th: Love of my Lord, mine

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own neceſſities and vows require me to come to him, but his love moves him to take me in his arms, lay me in his boſom, and call me friend and beloved. I ſee my ſelf a dirty unworthy contemptible thing, and yet he never leaves ſending, calling and inviting me to him and to relye upon him. I ſee all my righteouſneſſes and religious ſervices as filthy rags, I am aſhamed of them, and yet ſuch is his love to me that he calls me to prayer and ſervice alwayes. His love and tenderneſs to me is beyond conception and above requital, And though I cannot comprehend it, I cannot but admire it. Well, though I cannot honour him as I ought, I will not willingly grieve him, but endeavour to remember him more than my food, and to ſerve and honour him at all times. I am indeed unworthy to be his, but I will be onely his, and though I can neither ſay nor do for him as I would and ſhould, yet I will ſay and do for him as I can,

can that may not be utterly ungratefull, and pray for his assistance, that I may cleanse my self from all filthiness of flesh and Spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

CHAP. V.

Of Duties to our Neighbour.

THe Covenant of Grace obligeth and binds us to duties of charity to men. Other men are in Gods thoughts as we, and he requires us to love them as our selves, and to guard and regard them alwayes, and so to abhorre doing them injury, that we should be ever ready to doe them good. Our duty to our neighbour is comprized in the six last commandements; therefore we may understand,

First, God requires us to maintain and secure our Neighbours honour; which consists in bearing a due regard, and manifesting a due respect to all in their several places. God hath set distances betwixt man and man, some excel others in age, gifts or office, and he hath appointed honour to be given to them accordingly in the fifth Commandement: Now as all the Commandements of the first Table depend on the first Commandement, so likewise all the Commandements of the second Table, are not difficult to such as observe to give to all their due honour and respect. Now we may consider all mankind as consisting of Superiours, Inferiours or Equals. Superiours may be considered as such as are without authority, as those that are Superiour to us in age and gifts, or Secondly, such as are in authority, and are our Superiours in office, and these are either, Domestical, Ecclesiastical or Civil.

First, There are Superiours and

inferiours domestical, as Husband and Wife, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants.

First, Husbands and Wives are required to honour each other. The Wife is required to submit to her own Husband, and to be subject to him in every thing, as the Church is to Christ, *Eph.* 5. 22. 23. 24. and is charged to see that she reverence him *vers.* 33. And the Husband is to honor by a tender love and respect to her, as his own flesh, *Eph.* 5. 28 and to be sensible of her weaknesses and live towards her as a Man of knowledge, and they both as co-heirs of the grace of life, 1 *Pet.* 3. 7.

2ly. Parents and Children. Children must honour their Parents, by reverencing them in heart, speech and behaviour, acknowledging their power by submitting to their reproofs and correction, obeying all their lawful and just commands, and releiving or helping them in their necessities, & Parents are bound to love & respect

their

their Children as Gods gift, and their own fleſh, to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, to correct ſin in them, and be ever concerning themſelves in their welfare, both laying in good Counſel, and laying up for them as God doth bleſſe them.

3dly. Maſters and Servants. Servants muſt count their Maſters worthy of all honour, 1 *Tim.* 6. 1. and obey them in all things in ſingleneſs of heart, fearing God, *Col.* 3.22. and be obedient to them with fear and trembling, as unto Chriſt, with good will doing them ſervice, as to the Lord, and not to men, *Eph.* 6. 5. 6. 7. and muſt be faithful ready to learn and patient towards them: and Maſters muſt give to their Servants that which is juſt and equal, forbearing threatning, and ſeek their welfare in ſoul and body. Thus every member of a family is concerned to maintain the honor and mutual reſpect among them.

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their Children as Gods gift, and their own flesh, to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, to correct sin in them, and be ever concerning themselves in their welfare, both laying in good Counsel, and laying up for them as God doth blesse them.

3dly. Masters and Servants. Servants must count their Masters worthy of all honour, 1 *Tim.* 6. 1. and obey them in all things in singleness of heart, fearing God, *Col.* 3.22. and be obedient to them with fear and trembling, as unto Christ, with good will doing them service, as to the Lord, and not to men, *Eph.* 6. 5, 6, 7. and must be faithful ready to learn and patient towards them: and Masters must give to their Servants that which is just and equal, forbearing threatning, and seek their welfare in soul and body. Thus every member of a family is concerned to maintain the honor and mutual respect among them.

Secondly, There are Ecclesiastical Superiours and inferiours. The Church consists of a body wherein are Governours, Overseers, Rulers, and Governed. And God who is the God of Order requires an honour and mutual respect from these, The people are required to know or acknowledge them that are over them in the Lord, and to esteem them ὑπὲρ ἐκ περισσοῦ very highly in love for their work sake, or more than abundantly, over and over, 1 *Thes.* 5. 12,13. Their work is honourable, and the people must greatly honour them, and be obedient and submit to them, *Heb.* 7. 17. for they are worthy of double honour, 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. and as a testimony of respect to them, they ought to make them [κοινωνεῖτε ἐν πᾶσιν ἀγαθοῖς] commoners with them in all good things, *Gal.* 6. 6. And these Church Governors should be instant with the people in season, and out of season, 2 *Tim.* 4. 2. Cherish them as a nurse doth her children,

1 Thes.

1 *Thes.* 2. 7. and by example, counsel and all good means seek their good and salvation.

Thirdly, there are Superiours and inferiours in the State. Magistrates and Civil Officers have a superiority from God, and every soul is required to be subject to them, Rom. 13. 1. and yield obedience, tribute and honour in thought, word and deed, abhorring to curse them in thought, to speak evil of dignities, much more to rise up against them; And they are to be shields to defend, cornerstones to unite, and pillars to support their people, and protect and secure them in all their just rights and priviledges.

2ly. Equals are such as stand alike in an equal state, and these are required to love as brethren, *Heb.* 13. 1. In honour to preferre one another, *Rom.* 12. 10. and each to esteem others better than himself, 2 *Phil.* 2. 3. and by love to serve one another, *Gal.*

5. 13. and to live as members one of another.

Meditation.

It is the will of the Almighty, not only that all men should be a guard and bear respect to me, but he threatneth them into this compliance, and I stand under the same command, and thereat, if I keep not my rank and charge, giving all men their due respect and honour, which becomes not due to them onely by humane laws and custome, but by divine appointment, so that by neglecting it I forfeit Gods favour and protection. Some are my superiours, whom I must honour for Gods sake and for Conscience sake, some are my Equals whom I must honour with hearty friendship and service. Others my Inferiours, whom I must not dare to despise, but honour them by giving, forgiving, helping and respecting them. There are none, whether friends or enemies, acquaintance or strangers but may claime some respect

from me by divine right, being either mine own flesh, as Men; or made the Lords by Grace and Adoption. O how great a charge lies upon me! This honour is often called Love, whose nature is to set a due estimate upon another, and it is so acceptable to God, that it is called πλήρωμα, the fulfilling or filling up of the law, *Rom.* 13. 10. I will therefore apply my self hereunto, and love mine enemies with a love of pity, mine inferiours with a love of tenderness, my equals with a love of friendship, and my superiours with a love of reverence, and be ready in thought, word and deed to serve them in any thing that opposeth not a divine Command.

2ly. We must mind our neighbours life and health, according to the sixth Commandement, which Commandement, though given negatively, forbidding all unlawful violence to his person, and impeachment of his safety by hurt done, threatned or intended, yet doth positively intend

tend an endeavour of his good in soul and body, and lays engagements upon our hands and hearts to endeavour and intend his welfare, and to exercise meekness, patience, humility, forgiveness and abhorring hatred and malice. It lays also engagements upon our words to shun all disdainful or provoking speeches, brawles, curses, threats, revilings, or the like, whereby he may conceive or receive hurt. And also upon our actions and behaviour, forbidding all churlishness, disdainful looks or carriages, or strokes, & requires us to be ready to do good, to help them in straights, secure them in dangers, relieve them in wants, forgive their trespasses, and abhorre revenge, or doing any thing that may tend to the endangering their lives or health.

Meditation.

Gods care of mans life is greatly manifested in making a Covenant for them with the beasts of the field, the fowls of the ayr, and the creeping things

things of the earth, *Hos.* 2. 18. and charging every man to regard his neighbour, and threatning to avenge all wrong done to the person of any, and I cannot expect exemption, if I be injurious to any. It were therefore wickedness to say, Am I my brothers keeper? and insufferable to wrong him, whom I am required to love as my self. But, alas, how apt am I to leave him, not onely out of my affections, but also out of my prayers, as if I did not care though God regarded him as I doe, if I have conceived any prejudice against him. O God make me more sensible of my duty. God cares for all men, my Saviour pities all, and shall I degenerate from him by unruly passions? I will both endeavour and pray against all pride and passion, that I may neither in thought, word or deed give any just occasion of offence to any, and therefore put away all bitterness and wrath, anger, clamour, and evil speaking with all malice,

lice, *Ephes.* 4. 31. and (as the Elect of God) put on bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind meekness, longsuffering, forbearing & forgiving, *Col.* 3. 3. and follow after goodness righteousness and truth, *Eph.* 5. 9. God hath made me for the help, not the hurt of others, and requires me to overcome others evil with good, *Rom.* 12. 21. I must therefore be far from doing him any injury in soul or body, whose soul and life is as precious as mine own. And be so far from wishing or contriving the least evil, that I must pray for and endeavour the life and safety of his person alwayes.

3ly, We are required to secure our neighbours chastity; for the 7th. commandement doth not onely forbid adultery, fornication, rapes incest, and all filthy thoughts, inordinate lusts, and dishonesty of body and mind, but intends and requires chastity, modesty and purity in heart, speech and behaviour, and is violated.

lated by lightneſs in attire or behaviour, wanton looks, dalliance of immodeſt ſpeeches, all which we muſt avoid, and not any way ſollicite the chaſtity of any.

Meditation.

Doth God entruſt me to be a guard to my neighbours chaſtity? It is neceſſary that every perſon entruſted be found faithfull, and the greater and harder the ſervice, the more is the honor to perform it faithfully. This is a truſt rather becoming holy and ſpotleſs Angels than impure man, conſidering how ſoon it is fulfilled, for he that looks on a woman to luſt after her hath committed adultery already with her in his heart, *Matth.* 5. 28. I will therefore apply my ſelf to him who commands me this ſervice, dayly entreating him to furniſh and ſupply me with his Grace, to fortifie and ſecure me againſt temptations, and will make a Covenant with mine eyes, keep my mouth as with a bridle, and

arm

arm my soul against inchastity, by daily mortification, that I may possess my vessel in holiness and honor, and endeavor after that modesty in attire, speech and behaviour, that I may not be an occasion of sin to others, and so mind my Lords command, that I may, against the solicitations of my own or my neighbours corrupted nature, stand secure and fortified.

4ly. We must not so love our neighbours, as to guard their estates and goods, which is intended in the eighth commandement, wherein by stealing forbidden, we are to understand, not onely that we should make no alienation of any of our neighbours goods against his consent, or without his knowledge to the hindring him in his just rights; But also by stealing forbidden, we may understand, that we should be ever exercised in justice and righteousness, so as in all our doings to abhorre Sacrilledge, oppression and wrong, and

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in all our bargaining to avoid fraud and make just payments, so that our neighbours estate may be so far from being endamaged by us, that we may rather be a help and security to it.

Meditation.

Lord, what a charge lyes upon me, that I must also secure my neighbors propriety, and keep the distinction of *meum* and *tuum* betwixt him and me, that he may receive no wrong by me in his estate! I understand that it is not onely the law of man, but the law of God that gives him right and propriety to his goods, so that any unjust alienation of any part thereof made by me, will make me a thief by the Law of God and man. What God hath enclosed, I must not make common; but seeing God hath given him a right and propriety, and given me a charge concerning him, God forbid I should by fraud or falsity, or any other unjust way seek an alienation of any part of his estate, I will therefore rather want than be

unjuſt, yea part with my own right rather than my honeſty, knowing that there is leſs evil in ſuffering, than in ſin. Why may I not think that by an honeſt induſtry, and a wiſe management of my little, through God's bleſſing, I ſhall be able, not onely to bear my charges in the world, but have ſomething to ſpare for the needy? and I have no need to burthen my ſelf with much, being but a pilgrim, paſſing (I hope) to a plentiful inheritance. I ſhall ever pray to be delivered from Covetouſneſs, that I may look on the abundance of the rich without envy, and the needy, as thoſe I am indebted to, and be ready to adminiſter to them. And avoid thoſe two nurſes of unrighteouſneſs, idleneſs and prodigality, that I may neither be driven to caſt my ſelf upon others for relief, nor upon any indirect wayes for ſubſiſtence, knowing that nothing ſavours, nor will digeſt ſo well as that which I can call mine own, how juſtly ſhould I periſh

for

for want, if I ſhould neglect to maintain my Neighbours right, or mine own honeſty?

5ly. God will have us regard our Neighbours good name, which is required in the ninth Commandement, wherein we are not onely forbidden all lying, reproaching, and unjuſt accuſing of any, and to ſhun backbiting, ſlanders and cenſoriouſneſs, but to bear that tender reſpect to their names, as to teſtifie nothing of them either in publick judgement, or private diſcourſe that is diſſonant to truth, or tends unjuſtly to detract from their good name and reputation.

Meditation.

What an enemy is the world in general to this duty, and how unruly is the tongue of man? We are bad our ſelves, and all places do ſo ſwarm with lyars, backbiters, whiſperers, tale-bearers and malicious perſons, that I muſt ſtop my ears to ſuch, and ſtop their mouths before I can keep

keep this Commandement. I find it the greatest part of many mens discourse to vilifie one man to another, and render them vile and contemptible. Satan hath used the trade of slandering from the beginning, he bare false witness of God to *Eve*, and of *Job* to God, and is ever following this trade, and brings up his children to follow it, that they are ever throwing dirt in the face of God and his Church, and also in the face of one another with pleasure. But I see I must demean my self otherwise, and as tenderly regard my Neighbours reputation as mine own. A good name is better than great riches, and I may be more injurious in wounding his reputation than in Theft, or Murder! *O set a watch O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips.* Slandering, lying and unjust and rash censuring are the real signs and fruits of envy, which slayes the silly one, and are the tokens of folly for he that utters a slander is a fool,

Prov.

Prov. 10. 18. and a lying tongue is but for a moment, *Prov.* 12. 19. and he that saith to his Brother, thou Fool is in danger of hell fire, *Matth.* 5 22. But truth and love are an everlasting Glory. I will therefore pray and endeavour to be delivered from pride, passion and prejudice towards any, and apply my mind to truth, that I may not by unjust accusation, or false witness bearing, wrong any man in his good name.

6thly. We must so love our Neighbours as not to admit or entertain any evil thought, appetite or affection to any thing that is theirs; as appears by the tenth Commandement, which enjoyns me not only to abhorre any act, wish or desire to have or possesse any thing of his unjustly (whether he hath it for service, honour or pleasure) but also to desire that he may be blessed in every thing that God hath given him, and to rejoyce in his prosperity.

Medi-

Mediation.

O how great is the charge upon me to seek the welfare of all about me, I see I was not made for my self alone; Could I mind and doe my duty how comfortably might all my Neighbours live about me? and would they apply themselves to theirs, what a blessed society and fraternity should we be, and a guard and security to each other? But how ever I must keep the Commandement of my God. My Neighbours due honour and respect I must be alwaies paying, it is life, chastity, estate and good name I must be tender of, and not allow my self a desire to enjoy any thing of his to his detriment, for God hath said to me, *Thou shalt not Covet. Psal.* 119. 36. *O LORD, incline my heart to thy Testimonies, and not to Covetousness.* I must not onely be harmlesse but blameless, do good as well as do no evil, for I am called to love my Brethren as Christ loved us, *John* 13.34.

13.34. who did not onely abstain from doing us wrong, but went about doing good to men in their souls and bodyes, and I must tread in his steps: if therefore I shun and abhor evil and injury to men, feed the hungry, cloath the naked, love mine enemies, forgive injuries, and stand alwaies ready and inclined to do good to all, I shall be like a Disciple of the blessed Jesus.

CHAP. VI.

Of Vigilancy over our selves.

GOd is pleased not onely to appoint us work abroad, but we have much at home and within doors, and happy is he that minds it, to be carefull of himself. We are indeed vile Creatures, but we are not therefore to neglect our selves, but be the more vigilant: We are

weak and distempered, but we must not lay violent hands on our selves, nor, because we have mortal enemies, must we become desperate, but our sad state should more awake, incite and provoke us with the greater heedfulness, care and diligence, to endeavour by all means our own recovery & Salvation. And to this end we have diverse calls from God. To repent, *Matth.* 3. 2. To amend our waies and doings, *Jer.* 7. 3. To cleanse our hands, and purifye our hearts, *Jam.* 4. 8. To believe in the Lord Jesus, *John* 14. 1. To work out our own Salvation with fear and trembling, *Phil.* 2. 12. To give diligence to make our calling and election sure; 2 *Pet.* 1. 16. To redeem time, *Eph.* 5. 16. To labour, *John* 6. 27. To strive or be in an agony *Luke* 13. 24. To watch and pray alwayes, *Luke* 21. 36. To put on the whole armour of God, *Eph.* 6. 11. To wrestle, *Eph.* 6. 12. run, 1 *Cor.* 9. 24. fight, 1 *Tim.* 6. 12. Mortifie, *Col.* 3. 5. and Crucifie the Flesh with its

its paſſions and luſts, *Gal.* 5. 24. and to be ever cleanſing our ſelves from all filthineſs of the Fleſh and Spirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of God, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. 2. And theſe and many the like precepts can never be performed without very great heed and induſtry, and all this is required with promiſes of aſſiſtance and ſucceſſe, if we heartily apply our ſelves hereunto.

Is there any hopes for a ſinner ſo forlorn and undone? I am then concerned to ſtir up my ſelf to inſtant prayer, and the moſt earneſt endeavours for deliverance. It is I my ſelf that have offended, and it is fit that I my ſelf ſhould be humbled. It is I that have a depraved nature, and I muſt be thorowly reformed and changed: I am beſet with deadly enemies, and I muſt bid them defiance. I am in a periſhing ſtate by guilt, and therefore infinitely concerned to mind mine own recovery, and the more becauſe I am called, commanded and dayly

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prest hereunto. If confession, shame and self loathing is fit for any, it belongs to me so vile a sinner to be herin exercised. If reformation and amendment be any where necessary, or hath any regard with God, none have more need than I to endeavour it. Will God hear prayers? Save them that believe in his Son, and give eternal Life to them that obey him? it is not then fit for me to sit still, I will call upon him, cleave to his Son, and apply my heart to his Commandments. If any thing that I (poor thing,) can do may be acceptable or available, I should be unspeakably wretched to neglect it. *Psal.* 119. 112. I will incline my heart O Lord to keep thy precepts alwayes unto the end, and will run the way of thy Commandements, when thou shalt enlarge my heart, *Psal.* 119. 32. Strengthen me O God by thy grace.

Sect.

SECT. I.

The Morning work,

NOw to the ſecuring our own ſouls, it would greatly avail and advantage us to be ever redeeming and rightly improving our time, and time being pareelled out into days, a daily diligence and vigilancy is to be exerciſed, To this end we may obſerve this method.

Firſt, Awake with God, When God doth unlock and open the doors and windows of our ſenſes, and ſhews us his tender care in preſerving us, and refreſhing our bodies and minds, we ſhould be ſure with the greateſt compoſedneſs and ſeriouſnes to return him thanks, that ſuch contemptible provoking creatures ſhould be the objects of his mercy and bounty, and we ſhould not think it ſufficient to return him ſome words of thanks, but open the doors of our hearts; for,

are not we the temples of God? We are no sooner awake but all the mortall enemies of our souls are ready attending to court and carry us away, and make a prey of us. It is therefore necessary to make haste and not delay to keep Gods Commandements, and in the first place to resign and devote our selves to God, and say, *Thou art my God and I will praise thee, Behold I am thy servant, O Lord I am thy servant, and the son of thy handmaid, thou hast loosed my bonds, I will pay thee my vowes*, and this morning yeild up my self and all that I have and am, to serve and honour thee; and desire that all thine enemies and every offensive thing in me may be slain and cast out, to give thee full possession this morning.

Secondly, Compose your self for service, first by viewing your own state Secondly, casting out that which doth discompose, Thirdly, by guarding your tongue, Fourthly, by set-

ting God before you.

1. Compose your selves by viewing and weighing your own state. Be not too credulous or confident of your own hearts, but remember how they have often misled you, and that they ever carry that stock of evil with them that is apt to set you on work at all times to your dammage or undoing, and that you dwell in the midst of your deadly enemies, who under a Pretence of friendship, are ever seeking opportunity to undoe us; yea consider that you are the Lords, and he hath more right in you, than you have in your selves, and that the time, parts, strength and all you have, are more his than your own, and that there is a great charge of duty and service upon you to God and man, and you have now opportunity to perform it, How intollerable is it to think of neglecting God or your souls any longer, seeing you know not whether you shall see to morrow, and your past neglects and faults ad-

minister so much matter of terror! Apply your selves without delay to employ and improve the time present, and let the experience you have had of your own sinfulness, keep you jealous and distrustfull of your selves, and more watchfull, and carefull to beg Divine assistance.

Meditation.

The sad experience I have of the slipperiness of mine own heart, and the sleights and subtilties of mine enemies call aloud upon me to stand upon my guard, and arm my self, that I be not a Captive to any sin this day also; I have been often surprized, and betrayed my trust by the enemies, insinuations, I will surely set stronger guard, & take better heed to my self this day, by abasing and humbling my self before God, resigning my self to him, & laying the strongest bonds and tyes upon my self for my security, for how can I endure to think of living another day so remisly as I have done? God hath ever bin kind to

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me, and yet trusteth me with time and mercies, and it were a base and unworthy thing to dishonor him with them, and mine own heart hath so often deceived me, that it were folly intolerable to trust in it. Where can I look to lodge at night, if I make my lust or mine enemy to be my guide all the day. O my soul awake, and be advised, how hath the mention and memory of mispent time and mercies tormented thee? Come then, and let us fully consent and resolve to live in the fear of the Lord all the day long, and put off his service no longer. And seeing God is my best friend, and all my hopes are in him, I will in all humility beg his assistance, in the morning will I direct my prayer to thee O Lord, and will look up.

2ly. Cast out every thing in the morning that may discompose you for service, Satan is ever distracting our hearts and filling us with quarrels or prejudice against our duty, or our state, and while we look on either

with disaffection or discontent, we cannot serve God aright, it is therefore necessary to get our hearts reconciled to both, and with *David* to chuse the way of truth, *Psal.* 119. 30. and not to refuse our present state and condition though attended with inconveniencies, knowing that Gods service must not be neglected, and by taking thought, we cannot adde one cubit to our stature.

Meditation.

Was ever Creature more vile than I, that am so unapt to mine own work? Had I been a plant, I should have born mine own leaves and fruit, or any other Creature, I should have served my maker in the place and way appointed me, but I am such a foolish thing that I am too apt to be offended with my state, calling, relations, and my very work, and through discontent to run as a slave after every lust and fancy. Discontent is a stock that Satan can graff any sin upon, and it will take; I am therefore highly concerned to get

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my heart in love with my duty and to esteem all Gods precepts concerning all things to be right, and hate every false way, and to do my present work in the state I am in, for I must not sin to day. What a fool am I to think any other work were more sutable, or any other place and state more advantagious to me, seeing my gracious Father hath ordered both my work and place. And if I serve him well and heartily to day, he may order me other service and change my state to morrow. O God enlarge my heart in love to thee that I may run the way of thy Commandements with delight.

3ly. Guard your tongue, the mouth is an open vent for evil, sin in the heart is like an Arrow on the string, that the tongue dischargeth instantly. The tongue is a daring, bold, unruly member, that waggs without fear or wit, and often uttere that evil that neither your selves nor other perceived to be in you. It is an instrument the devil makes much use of, you cannot set too strong

a guard upon it, hear the Apostle, Jam. 3. 5. and 10. The tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things, behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth, and the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity, so is the tongue among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire of hell for every kind of Beasts, Birds and Serpents, and things in the Sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind, but the tongue can no man tame, it is an unruly evil full of deadly poison, therewith blesse we God, and therewith Curse we men. Such a dangerous instrument you have always with you, and if you governit not, your Religion is vain: Words must be accounted for, and there are words that shall never be forgiven, Luke 12. 10. you cannot be ignorant how apt you are to sin with your tongue, are not the evils of it more than of all the other members. The tongue hath so many wayes to offend, that you need to be as careful

of it every day as of your life.

Meditation.

It is surely no easie task to set and keep in order what Satan hath displaced and disaffected: I am corrupt in every part, but evil slips out so soon and fast at my mouth, that I find it a hard task to govern it, which doth so plainly speak out my naughtiness, and publish my folly. I find the evils of the tongue to be double the number of the letters in the Alphabet, and can I concern my self enough in securing it that hath so many wayes to offend? I have renounced Satan, the world and the flesh, and shall I lend my tongue to any of these, to dishonour my God and gratifie them? No, he that keeps his mouth and his tongue, keeps his soul from trouble, Prov. 21. 23. *Why shall I not with holy* David (Psal. 17. 3.) *purpose that my lips shall not transgresse; and say, I will take heed to my ways that I sin not with my tongue?* Psal. 39. 1. *And though I should be many years with* Pambo, *in learning this lesson, yet the*

fruit

fruit is worth the pains. I see that he hath so many temptations, and so much weakness as I have, needs a bridle and curb straighter than one of his own making. to govern this unruly member, I will therefore put David's *petition into my dayly morning prayer, and pray Lord, set a watch before my mouth, keep the door of my lips, for who is sufficient for this work? I have all reason to be jealous of my heart always, but never to forget what a world of iniquity the tongue is. O God teach me that no corrupt communication may proceed out of my mouth, but that which is good, to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers.*

4ly. Set God before you. It is his eye is upon you, and you are never out of his sight, he observes all you say do or think, and takes notice how you bestow your time, estate and all you have. Oh do nothing any where that you would not do in Gods presence. The sight of him will keep you clean, and make you diligent,

see him who is invisible, and the sight of him will mightily enable you for the service of the day.

Say then, O my Soul, dost thou see and know who is here? Canst thou sin or trifle while the holy one stands by thee? darst thou neglect and slight him? O wipe thy eyes and see him. He is by thee, and will not be from thee all the day, it is his arm upholds thee, his hand supplies thee, and his eye is ever upon thee, and for his sake men, and other creatures are officious to thee. When thou art alone, he is with thee how canst thou forbear to hold communion with him? When thou art in company, he is not from thee, how canst thou withdraw thy self from him, or forbear to acquaint thy company with him, or at least to let them see the love thou beares to him? he is woing me by all the mercies he conferres on me, he speaks to me in every sermon, and in every providence; there is, nor can be no forsaking betwixt him and me, but

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what is begun in me; I must sinfully forget my self if I forget him. He is with me as a sheild to defend me, if I trust in him, I am secure. He is with me as a Father to pity and supply me, I cannot be miserable if I honour him; he is with me as the Almighty to create what is wanting, and perfect what is begun in me, and he will glorifie me if I serve him. Though I walk in the midst of trouble he will revive and encourage me, Though in the valey of the shadow of death, my God is with me; his rod and his staffe comfort me, and if I honour him as my God, surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all my dayes. The sight of my God by Faith, will blunt the edge of temptations, damp the fire of lust and quicken and incite my graces: O keep the eye of my faith, O God, open alwayes to see thee, that I may every where and evermore live as in thy sight, till I come to dwell in thy presence, and so apprehend thee as within call that I may pray always.

Sect.

SECT. II.

Duties in the Day.

HAving thus composed your self in the morning, and to meditation added, earnest prayer and supplication, apply your self to your calling. A calling is such an honest and lawful exercise that rendreth us useful in the world, or it is such an employment wherein a man doth onely exercise his skill, but the dispositions of his mind whether good or evil, so that as a prophane man interweaves his fraud, deceit and unrighteousness in his trade; and makes it a mystery of iniquity, so also a pious person doth exercise the fear of God, love to God, and faith in him by breathing out ejaculations, or having transient apprehensions of him, and doth exercise his righteousness, honesty and goodness to men, and also he is not utterly forgetful of his own danger, but preserves

ſerves and exerciſeth a watchfulneſs over himſelf, that he be not led into any evil, but is holy in his earthly employment and buſineſs.

Meditation.

To be out of employment is to be ready for any temptation, ſo that a calling is neceſſary, but I ſee it is as neceſſary in my calling to ſhew my ſelf a Chriſtian as an Artiſt, and uſe conſcience, as well as ſcience therein. It is evident that I ſhould be holy in all manner of converſation, 1 *Pet.* 1. 15. ἐν πάσῃ ἀναστροφῇ and in every turn, and therefore in my calling wherein the greateſt part of my time is ſpent. But, alas, how hard is this? If I lay all buſineſs aſide to pray, and pray God to hear me, how often is it that I ſcarce hear or intend my ſelf, and while I make it my errand to him, to intend and mind me, I ſcarce mind him or my ſelf, and how ſhall I then be holy in worldly employments? Without doubt, Callings were

were not appointed to call men off from the exercise of piety and righteousness, O that I might so savour the things of God, and be filled with his fear, that I may in all my employments evidence the faith and honesty of a Christian, and whatever I doe, I may doe it to the glory of God. God forbid, that I should loose my Conscience in my Calling; or in the use and exercise of my skill, should neglect piety and honesty, knowing that I am never safe but when I am exercised in well doing.

Secondly. Keep a guard and watch over your selves in all your diversions. We are often call'd away from our ordinary employment, and that sometimes by our own weakness or occasions, as for our recreation, receiving our repast, or retirements, or sometimes by divine providence, but in all these we must keep a guard upon our selves that we fall not.

1. Stand

1. Stand upon your guard in your recreations. It is true, The bow that is over-bent is broken, or that is ever bent is weakned, We need releaſe and diverſions ſometimes, but wemuſt beſure we make nodiverſions from faith and a good conſcience, but keep our watch and Gods armour upon us. A calling is often as a little ſanctuary, out of which none but ſome daring temptation will fetch us, but when we come out for our recreation, many temptations and luſts as ſo many cheaters, attend to trepane us. It is therefore neceſſary that we ever ſtand guarded. A whet is no let, but we muſt not whet till we take off all the edge. It is neceſſary I ſhould take a run, where I cannot by an ordinary ſtep get over, but I muſt not run my ſelf out of breath, and then venture. Recreations may be uſed, but we mu't not thereby unfit, but our ſelves for further ſervice.

Meditation.

Lord, what a poor creature am I, who am in danger both in my calling and in my recreations of falling into sin! I had need ever to keep my self under the wing of the Almighty, and to stand ever armed who am allwayes attempted by open assaults or sudden surprizes of my deadly enemies. My weakness requires relaxation and release sometimes, but how apt am I to turn my lawfull liberty into licentiousness. If I think to recreate and refresh my self, by company and society, Oh the temptations I often meet with there, One man hath a heart cankered with malice against his his neighbour, and he opens his sores to me, and endeavours to turn my stomach also against him, and to infect me with his disease; Another tempers his discourse with so much unsavory and vain language, if not with oathes and curses, that I am in danger to become partner with him in his sin and folly. Another would

would entice me by his ſtrong and pleaſant liquors to drown my reaſon, and transform my ſelf into a beaſt before him, ſo that I need much choiceneſs in my Society. Or if I ſet my ſelf to ſome harmleſs exerciſe, how hard is it to uſe it harmleſly and with moderation! Lord lead me in the path I ſhould walk, for I commit my ſelf unto thee, I know I muſt not oppreſs my ſelf by the buſineſs of my calling, neither muſt I enſnare my ſelf by my recreations, but ſo order my ſelf in both, that I may not in either unfit my ſelf for judgement. I will therefore labour and pray that I may be holy and harmleſs all the day, and account my ſelf greatly concerned to keep a guard upon my ſelf at all times, and not to omit it in thoſe few minutes that I am refreſhing my ſelf, in laying the buſineſs of my vocation.

2. Diverſions are made by taking our food and repaſt, Natures craves, and

and God Commands and appoints us to use it, and he gives us both our food and the blessing; for man lives not by bread alone. It is necessary therefore that we look up to him, acknowlenging his bounty to us and our dependance on him, and glorifie him in our eating and drinking. Various are the provisions made for us. At first, God gave man the herb of the field for food, that he might find a table furnisht with variety without his care and cooking, and sit down and dine. He gave him also of the fruit of the trees, that he might stand and pluck them, and might every where meet these tendring their acknowledgements of him by dropping them in his bosom, or laying them at his feet. But afterward was pleased to add to his Bill of fare, and give the flesh of Beasts, Fowls, and Fish; so that it often costeth the lives of many creatures to make us a meal. Now in this large allowance from God, it is necessary to be thankfull to him and

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adore him, remembring we are not worthy of the leaſt of his mercies; and alſo to be temperate, knowing that no creature is to be abuſed.

Meditation.

Oh how great is the liberality and bounty of the Almighty, who gives us meat in due ſeaſon, and fails not to relieve me dayly; but appoints ſuch variety of creatures for my ſuſtenance! I am not worthy that any herb ſhould be cropt, or any fruit pluckt, or any root pulled up for my ſake, much leſs that harmleſs creatures ſhould dy to keep me alive, who am not onely unprofitable, but daily provoaking. But yet ſuch is his goodneſs, that he allows me the quinteſſence of all to relieve my frail nature, ſo that I may well account it a mortal ſin to abuſe them to exceſs, or to be unthankfull. Surely when ever I eat or drink I am bound to glorifie God, who makes ſuch proviſion for me, and then bleſſeth it to my nour-

iſhment

rishment. What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits? At how great a charge am I kept dayly! my expenses are unspeakably more than my earnings. What multitudes of Creatures have dyed to feed me, and at what an expense of blood and treasure is the Lord to maintain me! and yet what have I done, or what can I (poor thing) do, answerable to all this expence and cost? I find that Gods tender mercies are over all his works, & he minds every living thing, and how should I think to appear before him if I should live as a devourer & abuser of his mercies? What a wonder am I of divine bounty! My Soul could only be redeemed by the blood of the Son of God, and my body is fed and relieved by the death and blood shed of many harmless Creatures; surely I am not thus favoured that I should be a slave to my lust, but a faithful servant to my Lord; I will therefore receive my food not onely with an acknowledgement of his

bounty to me, but endeavour to return better and more dutiful to him after every meal, for all this provision and expense is not that I might only please my appetite, but that my heart and whole man might become more ready and apt to serve my Lord and Benefactor.

3ly. Diversions are made by retirements, though man be a sociable Creature, yet he finds it meet sometimes to withdraw himself out of the noise of business and company, that he may enjoy some near converse with himself, But in these retirements we are not alwayes safe, but had need be strongly guarded, for if Satan sees us alone, he will be sure to send some of his emissories to us to keep us company, such as discontent, distrust, self-love, pride, envy, worldliness, or the like, and some of these shall so urge and press upon us, and so dog & follow us, and meet us again and again, that if we be not fully employed, and well

well armed, we ſhall receive great hurt and miſchief. Meditation is indeed a holy ordinance which brings in much advantage to the Soul, herein we may have that converſe with God and with our own ſouls that we may be much bettered and amended, and all our graces and comforts ſtrengthened and enlarged. But be ſure, Satan (if poſſible) will diſturb and diſcompoſe you, We muſt therefore fortifie our ſelves with grace and reſolution, and lay hold on God by faith, and by holy ejaculations for aſſiſtance, be continually keeping our ſouls with God, or we may return from our retirements aſhamed that God or men ſhould know how our ſouls have been therein employed.

Meditation.

Oh what an unknown depth of evil is in the heart of man! that is ever apt, either to bring out its ſtock of ſin and folly to ſet the tongue and other members on work before men, or

else to retire and sneak into a corner, to feed it self with contemplative wickedness, so that both alone and in company he is apt to be undoing himself, and though sin sometimes appears exceeding sinful, and Christ altogether lovely, that we are apt to think and say, We could rather dy than deny or leave our Lord, or embrace a lust, yet O how soon and suddenly is the soul often surprized, and taken captive by some base and contemptible lust, of which (vile sinner) I have so much experience, that I have reason to cry out, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? How often have I thought my soul to be so warmed and armed with the divine love, that I might have ventured to have walked alone or in company, and bid defiance to temptations, and yet have been so insensibly, and before I was aware, surprized; and hurryed away by the violence of temptations in my retirements, that I have been a ter-

a terror to my ſelf, and rendered my ſelf unfit for any ſervice of God? ſurely he that hath ſuch a nature, and ſuch ſubtil active enemies as I have, had need to be ever working out his own Salvation with fear and trembling, and to be ever ſenſible that it is the greateſt piece of folly to truſt in his own heart, or lean to his own underſtanding. I have ſometimes thought that God is ſo viſible in his works of Creation and Providence, that if I had an opportunity to walk abroad alone, and view his works above, below and round about me. I ſhould ſee and adore him in every thing, and return ſo raviſhed as never to forget him, and yet for want of diligent heedfullneſs, (though I walk in the midſt of his works, and many of them reach out benefits to me) how often are mine eyes cloſed, that I walk as if God were not to be ſeen in all my way? I carry about with me every whither a ſoul guilty of ſo many faults that I am thereby in continual danger, and yet

when I have leisure and am alone, how little do I do to its humiliation or amendment? O my soul, how dreadful is it, when retirements to walk with God, or to converse with thee, prove the losse of God and the soul? how canst thou promise thy self when removed from hence to dwell in his presence, if in retirements thou shunest his presence, or sufferest the Devil so easily to crowd in a lust, to part thy God and thee? there is much to be gained by retirements. If I walk with God and cleave to him I shall receive some pledge of love from him but I must be ever guarded with faith and grace. I will therefore retire no longer than I can by the strength of my faith stand secure from temptations, and make my self a gainer. Help me O God to evidence that I am wholly thine and devoted to thee.

Secondly. Diversions from our particular callings are sometimes made by Divine Providence, God sends

ſends afflictions, and here we need to guard our ſelves, and to take ſpecial heed to our ſouls. Man is a tender creature and ſoon hurt, A depending creature, and ſoon diſturbed, He is born to ſorrows, and doth not fail to inherite them. We have theſe ſometimes in our bodyes, eſtates, names and relations, our ſouls alſo are tender things, and ſin in reality or appearance brings often great terrours or diſpondencies. Theſe come upon us ſometimes ſuddenly, and we are ready to be overwhelmed by them, ſometimes gradually, and the ſight and fright of them doubles them to us, But now it is neceſſary that we be fore-armed with faith and patience and the like graces, that no affliction drive us from our God or our duty, but haſten us to him; We muſt not be hardned but humbled by them, not be ſtupid but amended, and ready to ſubmit.

Meditation.

The Almighty hath so closely united soul and body, that there is not the least ayl or obstruction in any part, but the whole is concerned and sympathizeth; so that our tender nature is soon hurt, and ayls are so hardly born that it is necessary that we be prepared and ready to bear them; Indeed when I consider how sin breeds and brings all mischief, and how conversant I am with sin, I may wonder that my afflictions are no greater, and have more reason to study praise than shew impatience; If I am afflicted it is meet that I should receive my affliction with humble submission, bear it with quietness, and endure it with patience, and not be as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoak. If Job could bless God when so many calamities were in combination to surprize him, it cannot become me to be impatient, who have greater sins and

and leſſer ſorrows, and far more mercies than afflictions. Afflictions may be, as corroſives, but in order to my cure, and God can make them to be for my profit. What if I become poor? the poor are Evangelized, *Mat.* 11. 5. πλουσιοι διαγγελίζονται, and made rich in faith, and heirs of the greateſt and beſt inheritances and fulleſt enjoyments, *Jam.* 2. 5. What if I am afflicted, God abhorreth not, nor deſpiſeth the affliction of the afflicted, but when he cries to him, he hears, *Pſal.* 22. 24. If I am on a ſick bed. The Lord ſtrengtheneth his on the bed of languiſhing, and makes or turns all his bed in his ſickneſs, *Pſal.* 41. 3. If I ſhould be an out-caſt, God doth gather up the outcaſts of *Iſrael*, *Pſal.* 147. 2. and ſuch as no man looks after, for with him the fatherleſs and friendleſs find mercy. Yea if my heart be wounded and broken within me, yet he heales the broken in heart, and binds up their wounds, *Pſal.* 147. 3. yea with

the Lord is mercy, and plenteous redemption, and he shall save Israel from all his iniquities, Psal. 130. 7. 8. God doth bring up his in the house of correction, and by afflictions he doth purifie, and purge, and make them white. And shall I be sullen, froward or impatient? God forbid. He is but a poor schollar that cannot say, It is good for me that I was afflicted. I will not choose affliction, nor refuse to submit when God sends it, Help me O God, that I may not forget the exhortation to sons, *My Son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him, Heb.* 12. 5. but arm me with faith and patience, and make me thereby partaker of thy holiness.

Thirdly. Improve the small remnants and broken ends of your time. Time is a precious jewel, and there is no remnant or end of it so small but it may contain in it Opportunity. There is commonly but a small space be-

betwixt a Question and an Answer, where a man is prepared, and yet there may an ejaculatory prayer dart out to heaven in this space, that may return with great success, as you may see Neh. 2. 4, 5, 6. God would not have us loose those little ends of time wherein we sit down, and rise up, and when we lye down, or walk by the way, Deut. 6. 7, Satan and lust are quick in motion, and may do much mischief to us in a moment. *Ahab* was slain by an arrow that entred betwixt the joynts of his harness, and Satan may crowd in a lust betwixt Duty and Duty, if not set close together, that may undoe us.

Meditation.

I have heard of great things effected in a few minutes sometimes, that formerly or at another time could not be done by great labour and long attendance, which assures me of a vast worth in opportunity: *David*, that chops in, as it were by accident,

carries away the honour of the victory from *Saul* and all his Army, fighting fourty dayes in the valley of *Elah*: And the prophet by stepping into the Sanctuary had a doubt resolved that had almost undone him, *Psal.* 73. and *Davids* prayer as he was upon his march did *Ahitophels* busines for him, 2 *Sam.* 15. 31. A short prayer, when time prevents, may bring a long and full blessing, and one sentence of Sacred writ read or heard, though in transitu, may bring full security and strong consolation: And can such a needy thing as I am be too diligent? I read when *Elkanah* had finished all his service at the feast, that *Hannah* went and prayed, and vowed to God, and sped so well that she was no more sad, 1 *Sam.* 1. And the *Shunamite* was no little gainer by going to the Prophet, though it were neither new Moon nor Sabbath: And shall not I lay hold on all seasons and times to serve my God? Who knows what

favours

favours God may have reserved for me that I lookt not for, while I am diligent in attendance on him. I read of the woman that by acting faith in Christ, and touching of his garment, though in a crowd, had more benefit thereby than all Physick or Physians could procure, *Matth.* 9. 20, 21. And the Eunuch who read the holy Scriptures as he rod in his chariot through the desart, had the greatest discovery of divine favour manifested to him, that ever he met with, *Acts* 8. and why may not I get much gain by taking all advantages to attend on God, I find that great good or hurt hath been got in the use or abuse of some few minutes. *David* goes up to walk on the roof of his house, & looking down he is dreadfully ensnared 2 *Sam.* 11. 2, 3, 4. *Peter* goes up to the house top while dinner was preparing, and he falls into a trance, and hath a special favour and honour conferred on him, *Act.* 10. 9. even to break down the partition wall betwixt

twixt Jew and Gentile, and bring the Gentiles into the Church. I will ever account time precious. My wants are many, and my time is uncertain, make me O God ever so mindfull of my needs, that I may catch hold of all opportunities to honour thee, till I come fully to enjoy thee.

SECT. III.

The Evening work,

WHen the day draws to an end, remember your time remaining grows shorter, and it is very fit you should close up the day with examination and prayer.

First, Examine your self and look over your dayes work, and see whether you have improved so great a trust as a dayes time, to your Lords glory,

glory, and your souls advantage, and whether you have walked with God; if we are idle, it is a sign that we think we need no time, and if we abuse it and our mercies, we must have a strange impudence to desire or hope that God will take it well at our hands. We have nothing, nor doe nothing but we must give an account of it, and how can we expect Gods favour and blessing at night if we have not served him all the day? Often reckonings make long friends, and often reviews will make our accounts the more perfect, and keep our consciences the more tender, and our hearts more heedfull and wary. Faults timely and ingenuously confest and bewailed, are the sooner forgiven, and the sooner amended. Self-examination daily, will greatly advantage us in our Christian progress.

Meditation.

I am here a steward entrusted, and a servant employed, and must be both faith-

faithful and diligent, and it is neceſſary that I take notice of my receipts to be thankful and faithful, and of my faults to be ſo humbled for them as to amend them; one ſin will breed multitudes, or lead after it Legions, and am not I concerned often to louk, into my ſo, l and ſearch, leſt any of theſe in a diſguiſe is got in there, to do me miſchief? The husbandman will view his fields and fences often, but my ſoul is more precious, and more in danger. If I never yet ſaw that day wherein I received not damage by omiſſions or commiſſions, ſure I have reaſon not only to ſet a guard upon my ſelf, but to be jealous leſt Satan be got into my heart by ſome luſt to keep God out of his poſſeſſion. I have a great truſt of time and health and eſtate put into my hands, as alſo an immortal ſoul that ſhould be more dear to me than all the world, and I am undone if I be not faithful. I have every day a God to honour, ſerve and obey, it cannot be amiſſe to examine

amine my ſelf dayly concerning my faith, love, and reverence to him, & to humble my ſelf for my faults and failings. I have had to do with men, and I owe much to them, it is meet I ſhould ſee whether I have exerciſed that goodneſs, charity and truth towards them as becomes a Chriſtian. Mine own ſoul is a great truſt, as alſo knowledge, time, and many other mercies, and I have had ſad experience of my former neglects, and how ſhould I ly down in peace before I ſee whether I have not forfeited all, and begged divine aſſiſtance and pardon? my truſt is great, and examination may keep my eye more wakeful, my heart more tender, and my graces more in exerciſe, for the oftner I ſee my weakneſs the more will my heedfulneſs and care be, if I be not proud or wilful. I know I am not perfect, but I would not be wicked; I am not without faults, but I would be perfecting holineſs in the fear of God. I will therefore conclude it very profi-

table

able to examine my self often, and dayly to review my wayes; for how can I think to sleep quietly with guilt in my conscience! I will often consider my wayes, and turn my feet to Gods testimonies.

2ly. Apply your selves to prayer. None but God can give us a nights or an hours security, neither is there any other to commit our selves unto. We ought therefore in all humility to prostrate our selves before him, and in faith and hope to commit our selves to him, as the almighty Saviour to deliver us, and a faithful Creator to supply us, and so to lye down under his wing and protection, casting all our care on him, and closing up the day with a full resignation of our selves to him, and hearty recumbance on him, and when we awake to be still with him, and endeavour so to continue night and day in a reverent remembrance of him, and a holy watchfulness over our selves till day

and

and night shall cease, and we be conveyed into his glorious presence in mansions of glory.

Meditation.

Poor wretch that I am, where shall I bestow my self this night? my faults and unworthiness may justly make me fear that God will rather proceed against me in wrath, than forbear me; and rather curse, than bless me who am so guilty, but he is a God hearing prayer, and pardoning iniquities for his name sake, and remembreth *Ephraim* bemoaning himself; I am infinitely engaged to him for his long patience, & large liberality, and those many thousand offers of grace he hath made me, I will therefore not utterly despair, nor any longer refuse his kindness, but bewailing my guilt and loathing my self, I will humbly petition mercy and who knows but he will exalt his grace in receiving me, for he loves freely, and delights in mercy. It is God alone that can afford

ford me ſecurity and give me a nights lodging in ſafety, and to him will I apply my ſelf, he hath the fulleſt propriety in me, his hands made and faſhioned me, his bounty maintains me, his ſon hath bought me, and his Spirit is ever ſtiring to reduce me, and though I am unworthy of any favour by reaſon of my depraved nature, and moſt unworthy becauſe of abiding corruption and repeated tranſgreſſions, yet I will own no other Lord, I will chuſe no other ſervice, nor wickedly depart from my God, his am I, and him only I will ſerve; and with this purpoſe and reſolution I will humbly venture in the name of Chriſt to beg his favour and protection, knowing that he onely can ſecure me from the prince of darkneſs, and the terrours of the night, and being the watchman of Iſrael, who never ſleeps, can preſerve me from all evil. And having made a full and hearty reſignation of my ſelf to him I will lay me down, and commune with mine own heart

heart upon my bed *Pſal.* 4.4. and remember Gods name in the night and endeavour to keep his Law, *Pſal.* 119. 55. and mine eyes ſhall prevent the night watches that I may meditate in his word *verſe* 148. yea ſurely my ſoul ſhall be ſatisfied as with marrow and fatneſs, and my mouth ſhall praiſe him with joyful lips, when I remember him upon my bed, and meditate on him in the night watches; becauſe he is my defence and help, and under the ſhadow of his wings will I rejoyce *Pſ.*63.5.6.7. The ſtillneſs of the night ſhall ſurely promote and further my meditation. I will endeavour to be alwayes and wholly the Lords, that by my meditation of him in the night I may fit and ſtrengthen my ſelf for the ſervice of him in the day, and in the day ſo intend and ſerve him that I may enjoy his favour at night, and make it my buſineſs and care to order and demean my ſelf that the ſervices in the day, and my meditations in the night may mutually further and help

each

each other, and both promote my communion with my God till I shall put off mortality, and be brought into his presence, where is fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore.

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